ED 289 345   FL 017 059

AUTHOR   Stansfield, Charles W., Ed.; Harman, Chip, Ed.
TITLE   ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for the Less Commonly
                Taught Languages. A Familiarization Project for the
                Development of Proficiency Guidelines for Less
                Commonly Taught Languages.
INSTITUTION   American Council on the Teaching of Foreign
                Languages, Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.; Center for
                Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY   Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE   87
GRANT   G008540634
NOTE   207p.
PUB TYPE   Collected Works - General (020)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC09 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   African Languages; Arabic; Bibliographies; Hindi;
                Indonesian; Information Sources; Interviews;
                Introductory Courses; *Language Proficiency;
                *Language Tests; Material Development; Oral Language;
                *Standards; *Testing Problems; *Test Use; *Uncommonly
                Taught Languages
IDENTIFIERS   *ACTFL ETS Language Proficiency Guidelines

ABSTRACT
                A collection of papers on the use of the American
Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency
Guidelines for instruction and testing in less commonly taught
languages includes: the 1986 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines; "Testing
Speaking Proficiency: The Oral Interview" (Pardee Lowe, Jr., Judith
E. Liskin-Gasparro); a review of the Interagency Language Roundtable
Oral Proficiency Interview (Pardee Lowe, Jr.); "Adapting the
ACTFL/ETS Proficiency Guidelines to the Less Commonly Taught
Languages" (Irene Thompson, Richard T. Thompson, and David Hiple);
"Materials Development for the Proficiency-Oriented Classroom"
(Jeannette D. Bragger); a "Topical Bibliography of
Proficiency-Related Issues" (Vicki Galloway, Charles W. Stansfield,
and Lynn E. Thompson); "Arabic Proficiency Guidelines" (Roger Allen);
"A Model of Proficiency-Based Testing for Elementary Arabic" (R. J.
Rumunny); "The Arabic Guidelines: Where Now?" (Roger Allen); "The
Application of the ILR-ACTFL Test Guidelines to Indonesian" (John U.
Wolff); "Some Preliminary Thoughts about Proficiency Guidelines in
Hindi" (Vijay Gambhir); and "African Language Testing and ACTFL Team
Testing" (David Dwyer, David Hiple). (MSE)

ACTFL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES FOR THE LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

A Familiarization Project for the Development of Proficiency Guidelines for Less Commonly Taught Languages

The Center for Applied Linguistics
Washington, D.C.

and

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York

Edited by
Charles W. Stansfield and Chip Harman

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1987

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PREFACE

This publication, which is the result of a joint effort between the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), is designed to familiarize the reader with the application of the work done to date on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines and to stimulate the extension of proficiency guidelines to the Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs) in the United States.

The goal of the proficiency movement, begun in the early part of the decade, has never been to dictate standards of learning, teaching, or testing. Instead, the proficiency movement has attempted to stimulate linguists, language teachers, administrators, and others to re-think their approach to foreign language teaching and testing.

In spite of the interest generated by the proficiency guidelines for the Commonly Taught Languages (CTL), there was a concern in ACTFL and at CAL that due to a lack of financial support and insufficient number of active teachers the proficiency movement would bypass the LCTLs. It was due to this concern that in 1985 CAL and ACTFL applied for a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to motivate teachers within the LCTLs themselves to start defining and discussing proficiency-related issues and to draft the first provisional guidelines for several languages.

This volume will be distributed to many teachers of LCTLs who have expressed an interest in proficiency guidelines, either by participation in the workshops supported by this project or in related conferences.

The authors of some of the articles contained herein were asked to write on a particular subject, while other articles were taken directly from recent publications in order to provide the reader with the most current thoughts on the proficiency guidelines for LCTLs.

The first chapter is a reprint of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, commonly referred to as the generic guidelines. The second chapter is a brief overview of the Oral Interview, written by two of the leading authorities on the subject. The third chapter discusses the federal government's Interagency Language Roundtable and its guidelines for oral proficiency. Adapting the guidelines to LCTLs is the subject of the fourth chapter, which includes an extensive historical background on the subject of proficiency guidelines. The fifth chapter is from a recent ACTFL publication. It discusses the very practical aspects of the proficiency movement with applications for the classroom. Finally in the main section there is a topical bibliography of proficiency related issues compiled especially for this volume.

There are four appendices in this volume. Each appendix contains one or more articles representing current work in one of the languages or language areas chosen for this project.

There is a brief note preceding each article to provide the reader with a topical summary and additional information about the article and/or author.

With the help of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, all of the documents in this collection will be deposited collectively and individually in the ERIC system and will become available in 1988 in microfiche or hard copy format from: ERIC Document Reproduction Service, 3900 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304-5110. WATS Telephone: (800) 227-3742.

ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

The proficiency guidelines on the following pages are considered the "generic" guidelines. For information on language specific guidelines for English, German, French. Spanish, Russian, Chinese or Japanese, contact:

ACTFL, 579 Broadway, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706.

ACTFL
PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES

The 1986 proficiency guidelines represent a hierarchy of global characterizations of integrated performance in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Each description is a representative, not an exhaustive, sample of a particular range of ability, and each level subsumes all previous levels, moving from simple to complex in an "all-before-and-more" fashion.

Because these guidelines identify stages of proficiency, as opposed to achievement, they are not intended to measure what an individual has achieved through specific classroom instruction but rather to allow assessment of what an individual can and cannot do, regardless of where, when, or how the language has been learned or acquired; thus, the words "learned" and "acquired" are used in the broadest sense. These guidelines are not based on a particular linguistic theory or pedagogical method, since the guidelines are proficiency-based, as opposed to achievement-based, and are intended to be used for global assessment.

The 1986 guidelines should not be considered the definitive version, since the construction and utilization of language proficiency guidelines is a dynamic, interactive process. The academic sector, like the government sector, will continue to refine and update the criteria periodically to reflect the needs of the users and the advances of the profession. In this vein, ACTFL owes a continuing debt to the creators of the 1982 provisional proficiency guidelines and, of course, to the members of the Interagency Language Roundtable Testing Committee, the creators of the government's Language Skill Level Descriptions.

ACTFL would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions on this current guidelines project:

Generic Descriptions–Speaking

Novice
The Novice level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally with learned material.

Novice-Low
Oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high-frequency phrases. Essentially no functional communicative ability.

Novice-Mid
Oral production continues to consist of isolated words and learned phrases within very predictable areas of need, although quantity is increased. Vocabulary is sufficient only for handling simple, elementary needs and expressing basic courtesies. Utterances rarely consist of more than two or three words and show frequent long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words. Speaker may have some difficulty producing even the simplest utterances. Some Novice-Mid speakers will be understood only with great difficulty.

Novice-High
Able to satisfy partially the requirements of basic communicative exchanges by relying heavily on learned utterances but occasionally expanding these through simple recombinations of their elements. Can ask questions or make statements involving learned material. Shows signs of spontaneity although this falls short of real autonomy of expression. Speech continues to consist of learned utterances rather than of personalized, situationally adapted ones. Vocabulary centers on areas such as basic objects, places, and most common kinship terms. Pronunciation may still be strongly influenced by first language. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, some Novice-High speakers will have difficulty being understood even by sympathetic interlocutors.

Intermediate
The Intermediate level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:
—create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements, though primarily in a reactive mode;
—initiate, minimally sustain, and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks; and
—ask and answer questions.

Intermediate-Low
Able to handle successfully a limited number of interactive, task-oriented and social situations. Can ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements and maintain face-to-face conversation, although in a highly restricted manner and with much linguistic inaccuracy. Within these limitations, can perform such tasks as introducing self, ordering a meal, asking directions, and making purchases. Vocabulary is adequate to express only the most elementary needs. Strong interference from native language may occur. Misunderstandings frequently arise, but with repetition, the Intermediate-Low speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

Intermediate-Mid
Able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated, basic and communicative tasks and social situations. Can talk simply about self and family members. Can ask and answer questions and participate in simple conversations on topics beyond the most immediate needs; e.g., personal history and leisure time activities. Utterance length increases slightly, but speech may continue to be characterized by frequent long pauses, since the smooth incorporation of even basic conversational strategies is often hindered as the speaker struggles to create appropriate language forms. Pronunciation may continue to be strongly influenced by first language and fluency may still be strained. Although misunderstandings still arise, the Intermediate-Mid speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

Intermediate-High
Able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Can initiate, sustain, and close a general conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics, but errors are evident. Limited vocabulary still necessitates hesitation and may bring about slightly unexpected circumlocution. There is emerging evidence of connected discourse, particularly for simple narration and/or description. The Intermediate-High speaker can generally be understood even by interlocutors not accustomed to dealing with speakers at this level, but repetition may still be required.

Advanced
The Advanced level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:
—converse in a clearly participatory fashion;
—initiate, sustain, and bring to closure a wide variety of communicative tasks, including those that require an increased ability to convey meaning with diverse language strategies due to a complication or an unforeseen turn of events;
—satisfy the requirements of school and work situations; and
—narrate and describe with paragraph-length connected discourse.

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Advanced	Able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining, and apologizing. Can narrate and describe with some details, linking sentences together smoothly. Can communicate facts and talk casually about topics of current public and personal interest, using general vocabulary. Shortcomings can often be smoothed over by communicative strategies, such as pause fillers, stalling devices, and different rates of speech. Circumlocution which arises from vocabulary or syntactic limitations very often is quite successful, though some groping for words may still be evident. The Advanced-level speaker can be understood without difficulty by native interlocutors.
Advanced-Plus	Able to satisfy the requirements of a broad variety of everyday, school, and work situations. Can discuss concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. There is emerging evidence of ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize. The Advanced-Plus speaker often shows a well developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms with confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing and circumlocution. Differentiated vocabulary and intonation are effectively used to communicate fine shades of meaning. The Advanced-Plus speaker often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech but under the demands of Superior-level, complex tasks, language may break down or prove inadequate.
Superior	The Superior level is characterized by the speaker's ability to: —participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics; and —support opinions and hypothesize using native-like discourse strategies.
Superior	Able to speak the language with sufficient accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics. Can discuss special fields of competence and interest with ease. Can support opinions and hypothesize, but may not be able to tailor language to audience or discuss in depth highly abstract or unfamiliar topics. Usually the Superior level speaker is only partially familiar with regional or other dialectical variants. The Superior level speaker commands a wide variety of interactive strategies and shows good awareness of discourse strategies. The latter involves the ability to distinguish main ideas from supporting information through syntactic, lexical and suprasegmental features (pitch, stress, intonation). Sporadic errors may occur, particularly in low-frequency structures and some complex high-frequency structures more common to formal writing, but no patterns of error are evident. Errors do not disturb the native speaker or interfere with communication.

Generic Descriptions—Listening

These guidelines assume that all listening tasks take place in an authentic environment at a normal rate of speech using standard or near-standard norms.

Novice-Low	Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high-frequency social conventions. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.
Novice-Mid	Able to understand some short, learned utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends some words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae about topics that refer to basic personal information or the immediate physical setting. The listener requires long pauses for assimilation and periodically requests repetition and/or a slower rate of speech.
Novice-High	Able to understand short, learned utterances and some sentence-length utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae. May require repetition, rephrasing and/or a slowed rate of speech for comprehension.
Intermediate-Low	Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Content refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and routine tasks, such as getting meals and receiving simple instructions and directions. Listening tasks pertain primarily to spontaneous face-to-face conversations. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.

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Intermediate-Mid	Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned utterances on a variety of topics. Content continues to refer primarily to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and somewhat more complex tasks, such as lodging, transportation, and shopping. Additional content areas include some personal interests and activities, and a greater diversity of instructions and directions. Listening tasks not only pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations but also to short routine telephone conversations and some deliberate speech, such as simple announcements and reports over the media. Understanding continues to be uneven.
Intermediate-High	Able to sustain understanding over longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics pertaining to different times and places; however, understanding is inconsistent due to failure to grasp main ideas and/or details. Thus, while topics do not differ significantly from those of an Advanced level listener, comprehension is less in quantity and poorer in quality.
Advanced	Able to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of topics beyond the immediacy of the situation. Comprehension may be uneven due to a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, among which topic familiarity is very prominent. These texts frequently involve description and narration in different time frames or aspects, such as present, nonpast, habitual, or imperfective. Texts may include interviews, short lectures on familiar topics, and news items and reports primarily dealing with factual information. Listener is aware of cohesive devices but may not be able to use them to follow the sequence of thought in an oral text.
Advanced-Plus	Able to understand the main ideas of most speech in a standard dialect; however, the listener may not be able to sustain comprehension in extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex. Listener shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meanings beyond the surface meanings of the text but may fail to grasp sociocultural nuances of the message.
Superior	Able to understand the main ideas of all speech in a standard dialect, including technical discussion in a field of specialization. Can follow the essentials of extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex, as in academic/professional settings, in lectures, speeches, and reports. Listener shows some appreciation of aesthetic norms of target language, of idioms, colloquialisms, and register shifting. Able to make inferences within the cultural framework of the target language. Understanding is aided by an awareness of the underlying organizational structure of the oral text and includes sensitivity for its social and cultural references and its affective overtones. Rarely misunderstands but may not understand excessively rapid, highly colloquial speech or speech that has strong cultural references.
Distinguished	Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to personal, social and professional needs tailored to different audiences. Shows strong sensitivity to social and cultural references and aesthetic norms by processing language from within the cultural framework. Texts include theater plays, screen productions, editorials, symposia, academic debates, public policy statements, literary readings, and most jokes and puns. May have difficulty with some dialects and slang.

Generic Descriptions—Reading

These guidelines assume all reading texts to be authentic and legible.

Novice-Low	Able occasionally to identify isolated words and/or major phrases when strongly supported by context.
Novice-Mid	Able to recognize the symbols of an alphabetic and/or syllabic writing system and/or a limited number of characters in a system that uses characters. The reader can identify an increasing number of highly contextualized words and/or phrases including cognates and borrowed words, where appropriate. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase at a time, and rereading may be required.
Novice-High	Has sufficient control of the writing system to interpret written language in areas of practical need. Where vocabulary has been learned, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus, schedules, timetables, maps, and signs. At times, but not on a consistent basis, the Novice-High level reader may be able to derive meaning from material at a slightly higher level where context and/or extralinguistic background knowledge are supportive.

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Intermediate-Low   Able to understand main ideas and/or some facts from the simplest connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. Such texts are linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure, for example chronological sequencing. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make only minimal suppositions or to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples include messages with social purposes or information for the widest possible audience, such as public announcements and short, straightforward instructions dealing with public life. Some misunderstandings will occur.

Intermediate-Mid   Able to read consistently with increased understanding simple connected texts dealing with a variety of basic and social needs. Such texts are still linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make minimal suppositions and to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples may include short, straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things written for a wide audience.

Intermediate—High   Able to read consistently with full understanding simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs about which the reader has personal interest and/or knowledge. Can get some main ideas and information from texts at the next higher level featuring description and narration. Structural complexity may interfere with comprehension; for example, basic grammatical relations may be misinterpreted and temporal references may rely primarily on lexical items. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. While texts do not differ significantly from those at the Advanced level, comprehension is less consistent. May have to read material several times for understanding.

Advanced   Able to read somewhat longer prose of several paragraphs in length, particularly if presented with a clear underlying structure. The prose is predominantly in familar sentence patterns. Reader gets the main ideas and facts and misses some details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject matter knowledge but from increasing control of the language. Texts at this level include descriptions and narrations such as simple short stories, news items, bibliographical information, social notices, personal correspondence, routinized business letters and simple technical material written for the general reader.

Advanced-Plus   Able to follow essential points of written discourse at the Superior level in areas of special interest or knowledge. Able to understand parts of texts which are conceptually abstract and linguistically complex, and/or texts which treat unfamiliar topics and situations, as well as some texts which involve aspects of target-language culture. Able to comprehend the facts to make appropriate inferences. An emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wider variety of texts, including literary. Misunderstandings may occur.

Superior   Able to read with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed expository prose on unfamiliar subjects and a variety of literary texts. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although the reader is not expected to comprehend thoroughly texts which are highly dependent on knowledge of the target culture. Reads easily for pleasure. Superior-level texts feature hypotheses, argumentation and supported opinions and include grammatical patterns and vocabulary ordinarily encountered in academic/professional reading. At this level, due to the control of general vocabulary and structure, the reader is almost always able to match the meanings derived from extralinguistic knowledge with meanings derived from knowledge of the language, allowing for smooth and efficient reading of diverse texts. Occasional misunderstandings may still occur; for example, the reader may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structures and low-frequency idioms. At the Superior level the reader can match strategies, top-down or bottom-up, which are most appropriate to the text. (Top-down strategies rely on real-world knowledge and prediction based on genre and organizational scheme of the text. Bottom-up strategies rely on actual linguistic knowledge.) Material at this level will include a variety of literary texts, editorials, correspondence, general reports and technical material in professional fields. Rereading is rarely necessary, and misreading is rare.

Distinguished   Able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references by processing language from within the cultural framework. Able to understand a writer's use of nuance and subtlety. Can readily follow unpredictable turns of thought and author intent in such materials as sophisticated editorials, specialized journal articles, and literary texts such as novels, plays, poems, as well as in any subject matter area directed to the general reader.

Generic Descriptions-Writing

Novice-Low   Able to form some letters in an alphabetic system. In languages whose writing systems use syllabaries or characters, writer is able to both copy and produce the basic strokes. Can produce romanization of isolated characters, where applicable.

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Novice-Mid   Able to copy or transcribe familiar words or phrases and reproduce some from memory. No practical communicative writing skills.

Novice-High   Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material and some recombinations thereof. Can supply information on simple forms and documents. Can write names, numbers, dates, own nationality, and other simple autobiographical information as well as some short phrases and simple lists. Can write all the symbols in an alphabetic or syllabic system or 50-100 characters or compounds in a character writing system. Spelling and representation of symbols (letters, syllables, characters) may be partially correct.

Intermediate-Low   Able to meet limited practical writing needs. Can write short messages, postcards, and take down simple notes, such as telephone messages. Can create statements or questions within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences on very familiar topics. Language is inadequate to express in writing anything but elementary needs. Frequent errors in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and in formation of nonalphabetic symbols, but writing can be understood by natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Intermediate-Mid   Able to meet a number of practical writing needs. Can write short, simple letters. Content involves personal preferences, daily routine, everyday events, and other topics grounded in personal experience. Can express present time or at least one other time frame or aspect consistently, e.g., nonpast, habitual, imperfective. Evidence of control of the syntax of noncomplex sentences and basic inflectional morphology, such as declensions and conjugation. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on a given topic and provides little evidence of conscious organization. Can be understood by natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Intermediate-High   Able to meet most practical writing needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics and respond in writing to personal questions. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data, work and school experience. In those languages relying primarily on content words and time expressions to express time, tense, or aspect, some precision is displayed; where tense and/or aspect is expressed through verbal inflection, forms are produced rather consistently, but not always accurately. An ability to describe and narrate in paragraphs is emerging. Rarely uses basic cohesive elements, such as pronominal substitutions or synonyms in written discourse. Writing, though faulty, is generally comprehensible to natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Advanced   Able to write routine social correspondence and join sentences in simple discourse of at least several paragraphs in length on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, write cohesive summaries and resumes, as well as narratives and descriptions of a factual nature. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express self simply with some circumlocution. May still make errors in punctuation, spelling, or the formation of nonalphabetic symbols. Good control of the morphology and the most frequently used syntactic structures, e.g., common word order patterns, coordination, subordination, but makes frequent errors in producing complex sentences. Uses a limited number of cohesive devices, such as pronouns, accurately. Writing may resemble literal translations from the native language, but a sense of organization (rhetorical structure) is emerging. Writing is understandable to natives not used to the writing of nonnatives.

Advanced-Plus   Able to write about a variety of topics with significant precision and in detail. Can write most social and informal business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences fully but has difficulty supporting points of view in written discourse. Can write about the concrete aspects of topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of expression, but under time constraints and pressure writing may be inaccurate. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weakness and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling or character writing formation may result in occasional miscommunication. Some misuse of vocabulary may still be evident. Style may still be obviously foreign.

Superior   Able to express self effectively in most formal and informal writing on practical, social and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos as well as social and business letters, and short research papers and statements of position in areas of special interest or in special fields. Good control of a full range of structures, spelling or nonalphabetic symbol production, and a wide general vocabulary allow the writer to hypothesize and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. An underlying organization, such as chronological ordering, logical ordering, cause and effect, comparison, and thematic development is strongly evident, although not thoroughly executed and/or not totally reflecting target language patterns. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely to a variety of purposes and/or readers. Errors in writing rarely disturb natives or cause miscommunication.

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Testing Speaking Proficiency: The Oral Interview

This Q & A from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics is a short information sheet prepared to answer the most commonly asked questions concerning the Oral Interview.

Both of the authors have worked extensively on developing guidelines and in the training and certification of interviewer-trainees.

Testing Speaking Proficiency: The Oral Interview

Prepared by Pardee Lowe, Jr. and Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro   **October, 1986**

The United States is confronted by a paradox: teaching students to speak a second language has been a goal of the second language teaching profession for over three decades; yet, as a nation, we are falling behind in our ability to speak languages other than English for such important purposes as trade, travel, and diplomacy. Although three of the four language skills--listening, reading, and writing--appear to be taught and tested in the second language classroom to the satisfaction of teachers and students, such is not the case with speaking. While much excellent teaching may be taking place, there is a substantial need for a readily available and effective means to measure second language speaking proficiency with the same degree of accuracy and validity that is possible for the three other skills. The oral proficiency interview described here may provide such a means.

What Is the Oral Interview?

The oral interview (OI) is a testing procedure that measures a wide range of speaking abilities in a foreign or second language. Although somewhat different versions of the interview and the rating scale are used by U.S. government and academic testers, the OI always consists of a structured, face-to-face conversation on a variety of topics between a student and one or two trained testers. Depending on the student's level of proficiency, the OI lasts from 10 to 40 minutes. The resulting speech sample (which is usually recorded for later verification) is rated in government agencies on a scale ranging from 0 (no practical ability to function in the language) to 5 (ability indistinguishable from that of a well-educated native speaker). The scale used in academia ranges from 0 (no knowledge of the language whatsoever) to Superior (adult professional proficiency), and uses verbal descriptors (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior) that correspond to the government proficiency levels 0-3. "Plus" ratings (0+, 1+, 2+, up to 4+), which are expressed as Novice High, Intermediate High, and Advanced Plus in the academic scale, are given to students who substantially surpass the requirements for a given level but fail to sustain performance at the next higher level. In addition, the academic scale provides for ratings of "Low" and "Mid" at the Novice and Intermediate levels to recognize weaker and stronger performances.

Each range of the proficiency scale (besides absolute 0 at the bottom and native ability at the top) is defined in terms of functional language use. For example, the Advanced level description in the academic scale reads as follows:

Able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining, and apologizing. Can narrate and describe with some details, linking sentences together smoothly. Can communicate facts and talk casually about topics of current public and personal interest, using general vocabulary. Shortcomings can often be smoothed over by communicative strategies, such as pause fillers, stalling devices, and different rates of speech. Circumlocution which arises from vocabulary or syntactic limitations very often is quite successful, though some groping for words may still be evident. The Advanced-level speaker can be understood without difficulty by native interlocutors.

This description, like those for the other levels, illustrates the extent to which the OI is based on real-life linguistic needs and behaviors. The descriptions also underscore the fact that the OI is a *proficiency* test, which compares the student's speaking ability with that of a well-educated native speaker using the language for real-life communicative purposes, as contrasted to an *achievement* test, which is based on material covered in a particular course of study.

How Was the OI Developed?

In the 1950s, the U.S. Department of State identified the need to verify the foreign language skills of its employees. A needs analysis of State Department jobs at home and abroad, carried out by the Foreign Service Institute, resulted in the development of a series of statements of oral language proficiency and a face-to-face interview test procedure. The interviewing and rating system was officially adopted by other federal agencies concerned with second-language training and use, and has been used since that time to test the oral proficiency of current and prospective government employees. The Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR), a consortium of government agencies involved in the teaching and testing of language proficiency, has continued to refine and expand the proficiency descriptions and to provide even better guidelines for conducting the interview.

In the late 1960s, the Peace Corps turned to the Educational Testing Service (ETS) for help in developing a program to test the oral proficiency of its trainees and volunteers. ETS' role was to develop training materials and to train testers at a number of in-country Peace Corps sites. In the 1970s, interest in and use of the OI expanded to include bilingual and ESL teacher certification in several states; ETS trained interviewers and raters and, in some places, also developed and operated testing programs.

In the 1980s, the proficiency scale and the interview have attracted increasing interest within academic circles, both as a testing procedure and as an organizing principle for designing curriculum and instructional activities. With the support of several grants from the U.S. Department of Education and with assistance from the ILR, ETS and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) adapted the proficiency scale for academic use by developing additional level descriptions between levels 0 and 2, and by renaming the levels as described earlier.

How Does the OI Rate as a Test?

The OI has demonstrated a high degree of reliability and validity. It is reliable in that trained testers who independently rate the same live or taped interview normally assign the same rating or differ by only a "plus" point. The OI is a face-valid test of speaking ability in that it requires candidates to speak in a realistic conversational setting. The content validity of the OI is maintained from interview to interview by having trained interviewers always test for the functions, contexts, and accuracy that characterize each level.

Practicality is a crucial issue in all testing. Paper-and-pencil tests are highly practical because they can be given to large numbers of students simultaneously and can be scored quickly and accurately by nonspecialists. Unfortunately, they cannot directly measure speaking proficiency. By contrast, the OI requires one or two trained testers and is both more labor-intensive and more time-consuming than paper-and-pencil tests. However, the importance of oral competence fully justifies the time and effort required to test it.

When Can the OI Be Used?

The OI is appropriate when proficiency testing is warranted or desired (as for placement testing); testing before and after intensive language training; testing before and after living abroad; testing at the end of a major sequence of high school or college courses; testing for course credits awarded for proven proficiency rather than for number of credit hours taken; testing for suitable language ability for certification of teachers and graduate teaching assistants. It can also be justifiably used by teachers and curriculum specialists to assess the effectiveness of their programs in developing students' oral proficiency.

How Does One Receive Training in Oral Proficiency Assessment?

Since 1982, individuals interested in learning about the OI or in being trained to assess the oral proficiency of secondary and postsecondary students have had a variety of workshops open to them, from relatively short familiarization sessions to four-day formal training workshops. Familiarization sessions, which range from two-hour presentations to full-day workshops, introduce participants to the concepts and procedures involved in oral proficiency assessment. Depending on the length of the session, participants listen to and rate taped interviews, and may also have the opportunity to conduct practice interviews. ACTFL-certified oral proficiency testers who have received additional instruction in tester training are available to conduct such familiarization sessions, which can be tailored to meet the particular needs of the audience. See the "Resources" section for further information.

Formal tester training, held under the auspices of ACTFL, ETS, and some ILR agencies, begins with an intensive four-day workshop and is completed by correspondence as participants conduct practice interviews over a period of several months. Individuals whose interviewing and rating skills meet established criteria are then certified as oral proficiency testers by ACTFL.

Can I Have My Oral Proficiency Tested?

Individuals who wish to have their oral proficiency tested can do so by contacting a certified tester directly. (An upated list of certified testers is maintained by ACTFL.) The tester records the interview and sends the tape and the rating to ACTFL. ACTFL sends the taped interview to a second tester for an independent evaluation, and then forwards to the individual a document with his or her oral proficiency level. For information on the service, contact ACTFL. An oral proficiency rating determined in this way is recognized throughout the United States and can be used for official purposes, such as applications for employment or to academic programs.

Resources

The following individuals may be contacted for further information on:
A= proficiency level descriptions
B= familiarization workshops on interview scale and interviewing procedure
C= formal tester-training workshops
D= advanced tester-training/research-oriented workshops

David V. Hiple (A,B,C)
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
579 Broadway
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706

Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro (A,B)
Educational Testing Service 18-E
Princeton, NJ 08541

Pardee Lowe Jr. (A,D)
500 Roosevelt Blvd. #317
Falls Church, VA 22044

John L.D. Clark (D)
Defense Language Institute
Foreign Language Center
ATFL-DES
Presidio of Monterey
Monterey, CA 93944-5000

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Note: These references provide general information on the oral proficiency interview, but do not substitute for the hands-on training required to administer and rate interviews in a valid and reliable manner.

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Palmer, A.S., Groot, P.J.M., & Trosper, G.A. (Eds.). (1981). *The construct validation of tests of communicative competence.* Washington, DC: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Interagency Language Roundtable Proficiency Interview

This review of the ILR Proficiency Interview is a short description of the interview, its purpose, how it is administered in different settings, how interviewers are trained, how standards are maintained, and how reliable and valid it is.

Pardee Lowe, Jr. has worked and written extensively on the Oral Proficiency Interview for the U.S. Government.

This article originally appeared in Reviews of English as a Second Language Proficiency Tests, C. Alderson, K. Krahnke, and C.W. Stansfield, eds. Washington, D.C.: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1987.

Interagency Language Roundtable Oral Proficiency Interview

Reviewed by

Pardee Lowe, Jr.
U.S. Government
Interagency Language Roundtable
Rosslyn, VA USA

Test Entry

Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Oral (Proficiency) Interview.
Adolescents - educated adults. Formerly referred to as the FSI (Foreign
Service Institute) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), sometimes called the
OI (oral interview) or LPI (language proficiency interview). Designed to
measure oral language skills in any language. Oral responses scored
holistically against the ILR proficiency scale. The ACTFL/ETS (American
Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages/Educational Testing Service)
Proficiency Guidelines are a derivative scale. Individual administration:
requiring one (academia) or two (government) trained interviewers plus
examinee. Time depends on examinee's level—higher levels and problem
cases require longer: 10-40 minutes. Number of parallel forms: infinite,
depending on administrator's ability. Tester training required.
Administration manual: ETS Oral Proficiency Testing Manual, ('82, 207
pages)—avaiable only with ACTFL/ETS training. Technical manual: P. Lowe,
The ILR Handbook on Oral Interview Testing, (Rev. '83, 410 pages).—
available only with ILR training. Cost of training by ACTFL or ETS depends
on length and type: familiarization is 1 hour to 2 days, full training is 3
to 5 days with subsequent interviews taped and conducted by the trainees
and critiqued by the workshop leader(s). U.S. Government Interagency
Language Roundtable, Box 9212, Rosslyn, VA 22209. Publishers/Trainers:
ACTFL, 579 Broadway, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10076, Ph. (914) 478-2011 and
ETS, Princeton, NJ 08541, Ph. (609) 734-1487.

Test References

Clark, J. L. D. (Ed.). (1978). Direct testing of speaking proficiency: Theory and application. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

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Description of the OPI Procedure

The Oral (Proficiency) Interview is a direct test of language speaking ability. The test format varies somewhat by interviewer and, to a lesser extent, by agency. The basic intention of the OPI is to elicit from the examinee the richest possible sample of language in the shortest period of time. In a 10 to 40 minute period, a trained interviewer determines the extent to which an examinee's second language skills approximate those of an educated native speaker. Normally, the speech sample is tape recorded for later verification. Although interviews in academia may have only one administrator, all official (government) interviews receive two ratings. Whenever a disagreement arises, a third rater is involved. The examinee's proficiency in general language--the OPI is not a test of specialized language and thus differs from the British Council scales--is rated on a scale from 0 (for no ability to communicate effectively in the language) to 5 (for functioning like an educated native speaker. The scale includes +'s at Levels 0 through 4, for performances that substantially surpass the requirements for a given level but fail to sustain performance at the next higher level, thus furnishing an 11-point scale. The ACTFL/ETS scale, which is derived from the ILR scale, provides three distinctions each at the ILR 0-0+ and 1-1+ levels. Thus, it is more sensitive than the ILR scale at the lower levels of proficiency. On the other hand, the ACTFL/ETS scale places all ILR levels above 3 (that is 3, 3+, 4, 4+, 5) under an omnibus designation, Superior. The ACTFL/ETS scale thus has a 9 point range (See Figure 1.). The following comments apply to both scales.

The OPI is divided into four phases: warm-up, level check, probes, and wind-down. The first phase, the warm-up, introduces the interviewee to the

ILR Scale		(ACTFL/ETS Scale
5		
4+ 4		Superior
3+ 3		
2+		Advanced Plus
2		Advanced
1+		Intermediate-High
1		Intermediate-Middle
		Intermediate-Low
0+		Novice-Middle
		Novice-Low
		0

Figure 1. Relationship between the ILR scale and the ACTFL/ETS scale.

OPI procedure, places her back into the language if rusty, and provides the interviewer with a preliminary indication of level. The second phase, the level check, ascertains the accuracy of the preliminary indication and determines the breadth and depth of the interviewee's vocabulary, structure, etc., at the level in question. Probes, the third phase, confirm the highest level at which the interviewee can perform, proving that she can go no higher by seeking evidence of break-down in structure, vocabulary, sociolinguistics, culture, etc. The final phase, wind-down, provides a feeling of accomplishment in the interviewee by returning her from the rigors of the probes to that comfortable level where she performed best earlier in the interview. In the hands of skilled interviewers, the four phases are encompassed within the framework of a relaxed, natural conversation.

Central to the OPI is the elicitation of performance requiring ACTFL/ETS/ILR (AEI for short) functions (see Figure 2), sometimes called "AEI task universals" to distinguish them from "functions and notions." The lower the level, the more lenient the accuracy requirements; the higher, the more stringent--so that by level 3 (ACTFL/ETS Superior) in an interview of twenty minutes or longer only sporadic errors in basic structures are admissible. Using the preliminary determination of the student's level obtained in the warm-up, the interviewer proceeds through the rest of the phases, formulating questions accordingly, focussing on performance on the AEI task universals indicative of the levels in question. Thus, a possible Level 1 interviewee would be asked to answer simple questions, to ask such questions in turn, and to roleplay Level 1 situations. Sustained performance on these tasks would suggest that the interviewee operates

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Level	Functions	Content	Accuracy
ILR Speaking Level	Task accomplished, attitudes expressed, tone conveyed.	Topics, subject areas, activities, and jobs addressed.	Acceptability, quality, and accuracy of message conveyed.
5	Functions equivalent to an Educated Native Speaker (ENS).	All subjects.	Performance equivalent to Educated Native Speaker.
4	Able to tailor language to fit audience, counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, and interpret for dignitaries.	All topics normally pertinent to professional needs.	Nearly equivalent to ENS. Speech is extensive, precise, appropriate to every occasion with only occasional errors.
3	Can converse in formal and informal situations, resolve problem situations, deal with unfamiliar topics, provide explanations, describe in detail, support opinions, and hypothesize.	Practical, social, professional, and abstract topics, particular interests, and special fields of competence.	Errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the ENS. Only sporadic errors in basic structures.
2	Able to fully participate in casual conversations; can express facts; give instructions; describe, report on, and provide narration about current, past, and future activities.	Concrete topics such as own background, family, and interests, work, travel, and current events.	Understandable to NS *not* used to dealing with foreigners; sometimes miscommunicates.
1	Can create with the language; ask and answer questions, participate in short conversations.	Everyday survival topics and courtesy requirements.	Intelligible to an NS used to dealing with foreigners.
0	No functional ability.	None.	Unintelligible.

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Figure 2. Functional Trisection of Oral Proficiency Levels

at a floor of Level 1. Probing would establish whether s/he could perform at a higher level, with questions concentrating on Level 2 tasks: such as operating in past and future time, joining sentences in limited discourse to describe and narrate, and handling situations with a built-in complication. If the interviewee fails to accomplish these tasks or attempts them without the sustained and consistent performance outlined in the Level 2 definition, them the probes will have revealed a ceiling on performance; and thus, s/he will not receive a rating of Level 2.

Content proves the most variable of the trisection's aspects. At the lowest levels, ILR 0/0+ (ACTFL/ETS Novice Low, Mid, and High) the content reflects achievement. At Level 1 and higher the content becomes more varied and the interviewee must possess suitable breadth for the level in question. The ILR definitions stress survival areas, e.g., getting a plane ticket, asking for directions, but numerous other areas could be and have been tested. In effect, interviewees operate with what they have and testers seek content only when the interviewee is not forthcoming. To rate at a given level the test taker must perform suitable functions with requisite accuracy and sufficient control to prove sustained and consistent proficiency at the level in question. Training reveals the wide variety in acceptable content that is difficult to describe concisely here. It is the interplay of function, content, and accuracy that ultimately determines the final rating.

The ILR scale is developmental in nature. Thus, at the summit the scale refers to the proficiency of an Educated Native Speaker (ENS). This does not imply that all natives are at Level 5. Educated Native Speaker status is normally acquired through long term familiarization with varying kinds of language from everyday to formal, over a wide number of both concrete and abstract subject areas, and with varying social groups over a period of years from mother's knee into graduate school in America (approximately 21-24 years). Although most 5's possess a diploma, ENS status is proven by the examinee's ability to suitably use the language. ILR experience shows that the majority of native speakers of English probably fall at Level 3. In ILR experience, the number of nonnative 5's is miniscule. Due to the scale's developmental nature, it is impossible for a 10-year old to obtain level 5 because a child that age lacks the required higher level vocabulary and the ability to handle highly abstract concepts and ideas. The use of the interview to date has focused on adults, although high school students have been tested; and experiments using the ACTFL/ETS scale with younger speakers are underway.

The interview is a sophisticated, integrative testing procedure, permitting the checking of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and culture. These are reflected through the normal linguistic components of language as well as through subtleties of meaning expressed through nuances, register and attitude. The test is not an "instrument" because the procedure is neither fixed in

print like a paper-and-pencil test nor _invariable_. The procedure varies
with the ability of the examinee and the skill of the interviewer(s);
this represents both a strength and a weakness.

Training

The training of interviewers is language-specific. This is because the
pattern of errors characterizing a language that relies on word order, like
English, differs from that of inflected languages like French, German,
Russian, and Spanish. Thus, interviewer training often involves the
discussion of typical errors or inadequacies in the learner's second
language. The high incidence of "street" speakers in ESL compared to the
more common "school" speakers in foreign languages (French, etc.) also
strengthens the case for language-specific training.

To officially administer the procedure, interviewers must be certified,
and after a lapse of two years, recertified. Training in government lasts
two weeks, training in academia usually four and a half days with subsequent
interviews taped and conducted by the trainee and critiqued by the workshop
leaders. Certification for testing in the academic setting is available
through ACTFL.

Stability of the Standard

Interviewers maintain the standard by frequently administering tests.
If too few tests are administered or if all examinees comprise only in a
limited range of proficiency levels, an interviewer's grasp of the standards
may drift. Both retraining and a set of calibrated standard tapes should
be available to combat this problem.

Uses

This testing procedure is best employed as an end-of-course measure in order to demonstrate to administrators, teachers, and students the functional ability the student has attained. The procedure may serve as a part of a placement battery when a prospective student possesses extensive oral skills, possibly from intensive language training, language houses, study or living abroad. The OPI should not be used frequently in class. Peace Corps interviews conducted at two week intervals revealed no progress on the ILR scale in intensive language courses lasting 6 hours a day (C. Wilds, personal communication, 1980). Moreover, the OPI procedure, even in the ACTFL/ETS version does not discriminate finely at the lower end. A number of other tests are better suited to discrete-point measurement, which is more useful at this level. One such oral test is the Ilyin Oral Interview.

Reliability, Validity, Practicality

In interview testing the critical psychometric considerations of reliability and validity manifest themselves as interrater reliability and content validity. Unlike other types of foreign language test procedures, such as the cloze, there are few studies of the reliability and validity of the OPI. The major data are experiential; that is, the procedure has proved accurate for assigning government employees to positions requiring specific ILR levels. The most accessibile gevernment study (Adams, 1978) demonstrates the OPI's high degree of interrater reliability--the ability of two different trained interviewers to assign the same rating to a performance sample--citing Pearson product moment corelations of .87 and higher.

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The content validity of the interview depends, among other things, on
the question-types used at each level—different levels require different
question types, topics, and functions (Lowe, 1981). In government OPI
programs, validity and reliability are maintained by monitoring interviews
and ratings and by periodic refresher training.

Studies conducted outside the U.S. government context have also addressed
reliability and validity issues. Shohamy (1983) found that choice
of task could affect the content validity of ILR-like oral interviews.
Bachman and Palmer (1981) investigated the OPI's construct validity and the
traits of both speaking and reading through the classic multitrait-multimethod
matrix, supplemented by Campbell-Fiske criteria for convergent and discriminant
validity and also by confirmatory factor analysis. They found evidence for
the convergent and discriminant validity of their version of the oral
interview procedure and strong support for the distinctness of speaking
and reading as traits, thus rejecting the unitary trait hypothesis of
language proficiency in favor of partially divisible language competence.

As studies of oral interview procedures proliferate, a cautionary note
is, perhaps, in order. A classification of such procedures might prove
necessary with accompanying studies investigating the psychometric properties
of a given oral interview procedure. Currently, there categories of OPI
suffice: 1.) ILR oral interviews in the strictest sense; 2.) ILR-like
interviews approximating, but not strictly following the ILR practice (in
which group one might place Shohamy and Bachman and Palmer); and 3.)
non-ILR-like oral interview procedures, such as the Ilyin Oral Interview.

In its strictest form, the OPI possesses a high degree of face validity
because it requires examinees to use spoken language. Unlike recorded or
paper-and-pencil tests, the OPI requires both a highly trained test
administrator and rater--rendering its frequent official administration
costly and impractical. On the other hand, no other procedure, to our
knowledge, assesses an equally wide range of speaking abilities with
suitably high face validity. Whether one wants to know whether a speaker
can survive for a day or two as a tourist or live in the country for a
longer time carrying on day-to-day personal and work tasks or even engage
in discussing abstract topics--the OPI is a suitable assessment procedure.

Conclusion

This discussion of the OPI has addressed the interrelationship of the
ILR scale to the ACTFL/ETS scale, the OPI procedure and its uses, the
necessity of training, the stability of standards, and the reliability,
validity and practicality of the procedure. It remains to be stressed that
with properly trained interviewers, the OPI's greatest utility probably
lies in exit and placement testing. Its ultimate utility may lie beyond
testing per se in its effect on curriculum. In this case, teaching for the
test--teaching for general functional foreign language ability--is not to
be discouraged.

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Adapting the ACTFL/ETS Proficiency
Guidelines to the Less Commonly Taught Languages

This article was included in this publication to give the historical background to the theoretical and practical problems encountered in the development of proficiency guidelines, both in the Commonly Taught Languages and in the Less Commonly Taught Languages.

The article discusses the special concerns that can be raised when developing guidelines for the non-Western languages, particularly in regards to their sociolinguistic characteristics.

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David Hiple is a Project Director for ACTFL. He participated in the development of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and has organized and conducted numerous oral proficiency workshops. He was Co-director of this project.

This article was originally written for Second Language Proficiency Assessment: The Emerging Issues, ed. by Charles W. Stansfield and Pardee Lowe. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1987(forthcoming).

ADAPTING THE ACTFL/ETS PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES TO THE LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

Irene Thompson, Richard T. Thompson, and David Hiple

OUTLINE

1. Purpose

2. Foreign Language Enrollments at the Postsecondary Level

    2.1.   Commonly Taught Languages
    2.2.   Less Commonly Taught Languages
    2.3.   Much Less Commonly Taught Languages

3. Foreign Language Enrollments at the Secondary Level

4. ACTFL Proficiency Initiatives Beyond the Commonly Taught
Languages

    4.1. Development of Proficiency Guidelines for the (Much)
         Less Commonly Taught Languages

         4.10.   Evolution of the Speaking Guidelines
         4.11.   Evolution of the Reading Guidelines

    4.2. Theoretical and Practical Problems in Adapting the
         Proficiency Guidelines to Specific Languages

         4.20. The Case of Russian
         4.21. The Case of Hindi
         4.22. The Case of Indonesian
         4.23. The Case of Arabic
         4.24. The Case of Chinese
         4.25. The Case of African Languages

5. Problems in Tester Training in the (Much) Less Commonly
Taught Languages

    5.1. Less Commonly Taught Languages
    5.2. Much Less Commonly Taught Languages

6. Policy Issues.

7. Conclusion.

ADAPTING THE ACTFL/ETS PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES TO THE LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Chapter is to address the application of proficiency guidelines to the (much) less commonly taught languages. Questions of relevance and appropriateness in theory and practice will be addressed. A distinction will be drawn among commonly, less commonly, and much less commonly taught languages. This distinction is more practical than theoretical and relates to questions of supply and demand, the need for priority setting, the availability of trained specialists in specific languages as well as the likelihood of developing such specialists in many of these languages.

Questions of Eurocentric bias and the impact of the application of the provisional generic guidelines to languages with different typologies, such as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic, and their role in a subsequent redefinition of the generic guidelines themselves will be traced both with reference to speaking and reading.

Theoretical and practical problems in adapting the guidelines to specific less commonly taught languages will be discussed ranging from the presence of Hindi-English code-switching at high levels of proficiency among educated native speakers, special problems of diglossia in Arabic, complex inflectional morphologies in languages such as Russian, the early appearance of significant problems in register in Indonesian and Japanese, to complex and predominantly non-phonologically based writing systems exhibited by languages such as Chinese and Japanese with repercussions for the generic reading and writing guidelines.

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Finally, policy issues affecting the various constituencies will be addressed including the role of the Federal Government, the language and area studies centers most directly affected by recent federal legislation, and pending regulations relating to proficiency testing and competency based language programs.

2. FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS AT THE POSTSECONDARY LEVEL

2.1. *Commonly Taught Languages*. The 1983 MLA Survey of Foreign Language Registrations in US Institutions of Higher Education (Brod and Devens, 1983) indicates that 784,515 college students enrolled for courses in the three most commonly taught languages: 386,238 in Spanish, 270,123 in French, and 128,154 in 'German. Russian was the fifth most commonly taught language at the postsecondary level with only 30,386 students enrolled in Russian courses in 1983, less than ten percent of the number of students enrolled in Spanish.

2.1. *Less Commonly Taught Languages*. Enrollment figures in 1983 for the first cluster of less commonly taught foreign languages at the college level (following Spanish, French, and German) were as follows: Italian 38,672; Russian 30,386; Hebrew 18,199; Japanese 16,127; Chinese 13,178; Portuguese 4,447; and Arabic 3,436. To illustrate the comparative significance of these figures, the number of students enrolled in Japanese courses in 1983 represented approximately four percent of the number of students enrolled in Spanish courses, and the number of students enrolled in Arabic courses represented approximately one percent of those enrolled in Spanish.

2.3. *Much Less Commonly Taught Languages*. After this cluster of less commonly taught languages, enrollments reveal

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that most other foreign languages are much less commonly taught. For example, in 1983, 507 college students enrolled in Swahili, 219 college students studied Hindi, and 85 college students enrolled in Indonesian courses, the latter figure representing approximately two percent of the enrollments in Arabic. Yet, even Indonesian scholars, with their 85 students, could take comfort in the fact that only 14 students enrolled in Uzbek and that only 4 students enrolled in Ibo.

3. FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL

At the secondary level, differences between enrollments in *commonly taught* and *less commonly taught languages* are even more dramatic. The 1984 Survey of Foreign Language Enrollments in Public Secondary Schools *(Foreign Language Annals*, 1984, 17(6): 611-623) indicated that Spanish, French, German, Latin, and Italian accounted for approximately ninety-nine percent of the 2,740,198 foreign language enrollments. Of the remaining one percent, 5,497 students were enrolled in Russian, 1,980 were enrolled in Chinese, and 51 were enrolled in Arabic.

Thus, within what has been referred to as the *less commonly taught languages*, there is a wide range in student enrollments, reflecting the fact that some languages are, indeed, *much less commonly taught*. This distribution provides abasis for priority setting in the face of limited training resources both human and financial.

4. ACTFL PROFICIENCY INITIATIVES BEYOND THE COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

ACTFL's language proficiency activities have progressed from projects in *commonly taught languages*, initiated in 1981,

to projects in *less commonly taught languages*, begun in 1983, to projects in *much less commonly taught languages*, started in 1985. The initial projects involved the development of proficiency guidelines for French, German and Spanish as well as the training of individuals to administer and evaluate oral proficiency tests in Spanish, French, German, and Italian. The second stage of activities involved writing proficiency guidelines for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian, and oral proficiency tester training in Arabic, Chinese, ESL/EFL, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian. The third stage of activities involved a dissemination project, undertaken by ACTFL jointly with the Center for Applied Linguistics to extend proficiency concepts to Arabic, Hindi, Indonesian, and Swahili, as well as preliminary oral proficiency tester training activities in Hindi, Indonesian, Swahili, and a small sample of other African languages such as Hausa and Lingala.

4.1. Development of Proficiency Guidelines for the (Much) Less Commonly Taught Languages

In 1983, ACTFL received support from the U.S. Department of Education to initiate the second stage of the guidelines project to create language specific proficiency statements for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. As the working committees began their task, Western European bias of the existing generic guidelines became most evident in statements concerning content/context and accuracy in speaking, and in statements dealing with the writing system (Hiple, 1987). After completing the initial draft of the Chinese, Japanese, and Russian guidelines, it became evident that creating meaningful guidelines for those languages would not be possible without a revision of the generic guidelines. As a result, ACTFL

petitioned the U.S. Department of Education and was granted an
amendment to the project to revise the generic guidelines in
order to make them broad enough to accomodate language specific
statements for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian.

Let us look at the evolution of the proficiency guidelines
as related to less commonly taught languages, tracing their
development from the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)
definitions through the Provisional Proficiency
Guidelines (1982) to the revised Proficiency Guidelines (1986)
and the respective language specific descriptions in several
uncommonly taught languages. Since space does not allow
inclusion of all the changes in the definitions for all levels
in all four skills, only selected levels in speaking and
reading will be discussed.

4.10. *Evolution of the Speaking Guidelines.* As an example
of the evolution of the speaking guidelines, we will take the
ILR S-1 definition and the corresponding ACTFL provisional
definitions for levels Intermediate-Low and Intermediate-Mid.

An obvious difference between the ILR S-1 definition and
the ACTFL Intermediate descriptions is that the equivalent to
the ILR S-1 is represented by two sub-levels - Intermediate-Low
and Intermediate-Mid. Liskin-Gasparro (1984) describes the ETS
Common Yardstick Project and the need for a scale that
discriminates more finely at the lower end, since most of the
foreign language students in schools and colleges tend to
cluster there. This need is particularly real in less commonly
taught languages where students can expect to invest more · time
in learning the target language than students in commonly
taught languages in order to arrive at the Intermediate level.
For example, the School of Language Studies of the Foreign
Service Institute estimates that students may require twice as

much time to attain S-1 proficiency in Arabic, Chinese and Japanese as to attain the same level of proficiency in Spanish or French. Thus, the need to distinguish among subranges of the Intermediate level of proficiency seems particularly compelling for a number of less commonly taught languages.

We will now examine the evolution of the speaking descriptions in the areas of content/context and accuracy from the ILR definitions through the Provisional Guidelines to the 1986 version of the Guidelines.

Content/context. The first thing one notices about the ILR S-1 definition is its orientation toward satisfying minimum courtesy requirements, survival needs such as getting food and lodging, and work demands such as giving information about business hours and explaining routine procedures. ACTFL's Provisional Guidelines retained the courtesy and survival requirements but left out reference to specific work demands. Instead, the requirement of satisfying limited social demands was added at the Intermediate-Mid level. The language specific Provisional Guidelines began the process of adaptation of content to the academic environment by including contexts appropriate for academic learners such as reference to school (French and Spanish Intermediate-Low), learning the target language and other academic studies (German Intermediate-Low), autobiographical information, leisure time activities, daily schedule, future plans (French and Spanish I .ermediate-Mid), and academic subjects (German Intermediate-Mid).

This process of content/context adaptation continued in the 1986 version of the ACTFL Guidelines with the introduction at the Intermediate-Low level of the more general statement "Able to handle successfully a limited number of interactive, task-oriented and social situations." As a result, language-specific statements in the revised language specific

guidelines of 1986 include reference to greetings, introductions, simple biographical information, social amenities, making and accepting/turning down invitations, handling routine exchanges with authorities, and making social arrangements.

On the whole, committees working on the Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic guidelines did not have any particular problems in adapting the generic content/context statements to their particular languages. They simply chose to give a greater or lesser number of examples, such that the Russian Intermediate-Low speaking description, for instance, is considerably more detailed than those for Chinese, Japanese and Arabic.

Accuracy. When it came to accuracy, the problem of adaptation was more serious, since many of the accuracy requirements in the ILR descriptions and the ACTFL Provisional Guidelines were typically reflective of Indo-European languages and irrelevant for Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic.

An attempt was made, therefore, to remove many of the quality statements and reserve them for their proper place in the language specific guidelines. For instance, the Intermediate-Mid description in the Provisional Guidelines contained reference to subject-verb agreement, adjective-noun agreement and inflections. In the revised Guidelines of 1986, all reference to these structures was removed. As a result of this revision, the language specific guidelines were free to include accuracy statements which were more representative of their languages. Thus, the Russian guidelines include reference to adjective-noun and subject-predicate agreement, and a developmental hierarchy of cases; the Chinese guidelines refer to word order, auxiliaries and time markers, the Japanese guidelines single out formal nonpast/past, affirmative/negative

forms, demonstratives, classifiers and particles; and the Arabic guidelines specify verb-object phrases, common adverbials, word order and negation.

A related refinement was the reformatting of the guidelines to present the generic and the language specific statements together so that the two could be viewed simultaneously. This change in format was particularly useful in light of the attempt to maintain the neutrality of the generic descriptions and to focus on the accuracy statements in the language specific descriptions. In addition, each level was introduced by a thumb-nail description.

4.11. *Evolution of the Reading Guidelines.* Let us now examine the development of the reading guidelines for ACTFL Novice-Low and Novice-Mid (ILR R-0). The first thing one notices about the ILR R-0 description is that it is completely negative — "Consistently misunderstands or cannot comprehend at all." In the Provisional Guidelines, only the Novice-Low level was characterized negatively as "No functional ability in reading the foreign language." However, this negative wording was felt to be unhelpful, so the revised generic statementsfor reading replaced the negatively worded description of the Novice-Low level with a positive statement which allowed for the beginning of reading development — "Able occasionally to identify isolated words and/or major phrases when strongly supported by context." This allowed the Chinese Novice-Low description to include reference to "some romanization symbols and a few simple characters." At the same time, the Russian Novice-Low description allowed for recognition of some letters of the Cyrillic alphabet in printed form.

When the ILR R-0 level was broken up into two subranges adapted for academic use, the Novice-Mid description allowed

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for some development of reading ability by stating "Sufficient understanding of the written language to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, street signs, building names, short informative signs (e.g., no smoking, entrance/ exit) and formulaic vocabulary requesting same." Although this positive wording was a step in the right direction, reference to cognates and the specificity of the examples posed a number of problems for non-cognate languages with non-alphabetic writing systems such as Chinese where there are no cognates, where learners are required to learn both characters and Romanization system(s), and where the reading of names, for instance, is a rather advanced skill.

The revised Generic Guidelines of 1986 make a distinction between alphabetic, syllabic and character based writing systems, thus allowing greater lattitude for languages such as Japanese and Chinese. A modification was made in the reference to cognates as follows: "The reader can identify an increasing number of highly contextualized words and/or phrases including cognates and borrowed words, where appropriate." All references to specific materials representative of this level were left out.

As a result of these changes in the generic guidelines, the Chinese description of the Novice-Mid reader includes the ability to identify/recognize a small set of typeset or carefully hand-printed radicals and characters in traditional full or in simplified form, and full control over at least one Romanization system. The reading context includes public writing in high-context situations, such as characters for "male" and "female" on restroom doors. In contrast, the Novice-Mid reader in Russian can identify all letters of the

Cyrillic alphabet in printed form and can read personal names, street signs, public signs and some names on maps. The Arabic Novice-Mid reader can identify the letters but has difficulty in recognizing all four forms of each letter as well as the way in which these letters are joined to each other in forming words. S/he can recognize individual Arabic words from memorized lists as well as highly contextualized words and cognates such as public and building signs.

4.2. Theoretical and practical problems in adapting the proficiency guidelines to specific languages

On the practical side there is little doubt that the proficiency guidelines have succeeded in injecting some vitality into the language teaching field by offering both a framework for program planning and an instrument for assessing student progress.

On the theoretical side, the development of language proficiency guidelines is an ambitious attempt to capture the most salient features of interlanguage at various points in its development and to describe them in a few well chosen sentences accompanied by a few carefully selected examples. For such an attempt to be realistic it can only be viewed as a dynamic process of constant refinement based on our ever expanding understanding of interlanguage development. In our attempts to disect the interlanguage continuum from total lack of competence to native-like performance we can take comfort in the fact that interlanguage development is characterized by a certain amount of invariance, or natural order, in the acquisition of various linguistic features. Thus, if we knew what the acquisition curves for various linguistic features of a particular language are, we could better describe what

learners at certain levels can do and with what degree of accuracy. This is a formidable task which can never be complete. So the guidelines will always reflect a stage in our imperfect understanding of the dynamics of interlanguage.

For the moment, the guidelines have raised many questions which cannot be answered due to lack of available empirical research. This lack of research may be partially due to the relatively recent introduction of the guidelines into the academic setting. Below is a partial research agenda which applies to all languages:

(a) validation of the claims in the guidelines regarding the developmental hierarchies of different aspects of linguistic performance including pragmatic and discourse strategies in different languages;

(b) determation of differences in specific aspects of linguistic performance across major boundaries;

(c) examination of specific linguistic features that distinguish planned from unplanned discourse;

(d) analysis of differences between the way meanings are negotiated in real conversations and the way they are negotiated in the oral interview since there is a real possibility that certain conversational principles may not be observed in the oral interview, e.g., in real life, conversational partners often tend to help each other by supplying words, but in the OPI the interviewer is trained not to do so;

(e) examination of the validity of the developmental sequence outlined in the receptive skills guidelines;

(f) a better definition of functions which are presently a hogde-podge of several different things.

In addition to these problems which affect all language for which guidelines have been developed or are being developed,

the development of guidelines for languages with different
typologies has brought forth a host of problems which hitherto
had not been dealt with. These problems will be examined below
in the context of Russian, Hindi, Indonesian, Arabic, Chinese,
and African languages.

4.20. *The Case of Russian.* The availability of government testers to train the initial contingent of academic testers in Russian made it possible for a group of trained individuals to begin work on the Russian guidelines in 1984. According to Thompson (1987), unlike the other less commonly taught languages Russian, an Indo-European language, faced no special challenges in developing language specific guidelines from a generic starter kit. This adaptation process could be best characterized by a conflict between the desire to make the level descriptions come to life through a variety of examples and the desire to preserve the global character of these descriptions.

The process of adaptation was also not without some uneasiness caused by a conflict between the desire to make the Russian guidelines conform to those in French, German, and Spanish, and the need to include in them references to features that are unique to Russian. These features were related to content/context, accuracy, and the lack of provision in the generic guidelines at the Novice level for the learning of another alphabetical system.

With respect to content/context, the committee members felt that they had to correct the West-European and adult/professional bias in favor of contexts in which American students in the Soviet Union would most likely find themselves, and to provide examples of topics that Americans would most likely discuss with Russians, particularly at the Advanced and Superior levels. It was obvious that many of the survival situations mentioned in the French, Spanish, and German guidelines could not be applied to Russian because they would either simply not occur in the USSR or would be structured differently.

Somewhat more serious problems presented themselves in the area of accuracy. For example, the provisional guidelines in the Advanced-Plus description referred to lack of accuracy in the following way: "Areas of weakness range from simple constructions such as plurals, articles, prepositions, and negatives to more complex structures such as tense usage, passive constructions, word order, and relative clauses." Such specificity caused problems for Russian where additional grammatical categories such as pronominal, adjectival and nominal declensions, aspect, modality, verbs of motion, and prefixation, among others, present significant difficulties for the learners.

The removal of all references to specific structures in the revised guidelines of 1986 made the subsequent revision of the Russian-specific guidelines easier, for the committee members no longer felt constrained by the imposition of developmental hierarchies for grammar more characteristic of less inflected languages. As a result, the revised Russian guidelines in the description of the Advanced-Plus speaker refer to cases, aspect, mood, word order and the use of particles.

Although all members of the Russian guidelines committee had been trained in the administration of the oral proficiency interview and all were experienced teachers of Russian, there was some uneasiness in positing a developmental hierarchy of acquisiton of grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and pragmatic features based on observation and experience rather than on research evidence. It was felt then, and still is, that the availability of large amounts of data from taped oral interviews in Russian should provide the impetus for psycholinguistic research into characteristics of learner speech at different levels of proficiency such as suggested by Byrnes (1987) and Canale (1986). The results of this research

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may help to re-examine and re-evaluate some of the statements in the current version of the Russian proficiency guidelines with regard to various acquisition hierarchies.

Finally, the lack of accomodation in the provisional reading/writing guidelines for learning to recognize/produce Cyrillic letters caused the committee members some concern. While some transfer can be made from West European languages when it comes to recognizing/producing Cyrillic letters, most of them represent a different pattern of letter-sound correspondence or have different shapes altogether. In addition, the printed and longhand versions of the letters look quite different. Thus, the learner has to go through a training period before s/he can recognize/produce Cyrillic script. The Provisional Guidelines, however, described the Novice-Low reader as having no functional reading ability, whereas the Novice-Mid reader was described as already being able to read highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas such as names, addresses, dates, street signs, building names, short informative signs, etc. It was felt that there was a discontinuity between these two subranges which did not reflect the early stages of learning to read in Russian.

The problem was solved by having the Novice-Low reader in Russian recognize some letters of the Cyrillic alphabet in printed form and a few international words and names. By contrast, the Novice-Mid reader could identify all letters of the Cyrillic alphabet in printed form and some contextualized words such as names, public signs, etc. Finally, the Novice-High reader could identify various typefaces in printed form or in longhand as well as highly contextualized words/phrases/sentences on maps, buildings, in schedules, documents, newspapers and simple personal notes. In this manner, the Novice level was designed to represent the gradual

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beginning steps in learning to read Russian.

The recommendations of the National Committee on Russian Language Study (1983), which called for the development of a common metric and its use to set standards for Russian language study, helped pave the way for the introduction of the proficiency guidelines and the oral proficiency interview into the Russian field. The response has been generally quite positive, and there has been a good deal of activity in the field involving the guidelines and the oral interview test in the past few years.

he following deserve mention: (1) a dozen or so testing workshops later there are now thirteen certified oral proficiency testers and two academic tester trainers in Russian thereby ending dependence on the U.S. Gove*rnment for training; (2) curriculum workshops geared to teaching for proficiency are now being offered to secondary and postsecondary Russian language teachers throughout the academic year and especially during summers at various locations nationwide; (3) videofilms of oral interview tests at all levels were developed at Middlebury College under a grant from SSRC for use in tester training; (4) ETS has developed an Advanced Russian Listening and Reading test based on ACTFL Listening and Reading Guidelines which reports raw scores and/or proficiency ratings from Intermediate-High (ILR 1+) to Superior (ILR 3) or higher; (5) major Russian overseas programs such as CIEE and ACTR use the ACTFL oral proficiency interview and the ETS Advanced Listening/Reading Test for pre- and post-program evaluation of participants, and data is being collected to update Carroll's (1967) study with respect to Russian; (6) some institutions have introduced graduation requirements for undergraduate and graduate majors in Russian in terms of proficiency levels in various skills. Other institutions are using the oral

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proficiency interview to screen prospective TA's. Many institutions are re-evaluating their language courses by setting course objectives in terms of proficiency levels in various skill combinations.

4.21. *The Case of Hindi.* The situation with Hindi presents another set of problems hitherto not encountered in the development of guidelines for other languages. In this particular case, accomodations need to be made for Hindi-English code-switching. Interlanguage is generally an indication of a relatively low level of proficiency, but in the case of Hindi, appropriate Hindi-English code switching is representative of educated native Hindi speakers.

In terms of extending the oral proficiency interview to additional less commonly taught languages, a major problem presented itself when no government tester was available to train academic testers in a particular language. ACTFL first addressed this problem in the case of Hindi. The solution, a time consuming one, was to train testers in a language other than the target language, and subsequently to assist the most interested ones in transferring the concepts, procedures, and rating criteria to the target language.

It was felt that before creating guidelines for Hindi, several problems needed to be resolved first (Gambhir, in press). According to Gambhir, it was desirable to look into the concept of an educated native speaker in the multilingual speech community of India where English is used by the educated elite in most formal and professional domains, and where Hindi is primarily relegated to the more restricted domain of informal socialization and to those areas of higher education that deal with language, literature and culture. Because of the widespread use of English, which is the co-official language of

India along with Hindi, in government, education, science, technology and commerce, most educated native speakers of Hindi do not get an opportunity to develop higher levels of proficiency normally associated with professional, educational and formal domains of language use. If the Hindi guidelines are to reflect the actual use of Hindi by educated native speakers, these limitations have to be taken into account.

According to Gambhir (in press), an additional problem is the presence of two styles in the speech of educated native speakers of Hindi. The spoken style, which contains many borrowings from English and Arabic, is used in speech and writing for informal purposes, whereas the written style, which contains many Sanskrit words, is reserved for formal speech and writing. The spoken style is characterized by frequent, rule-governed, Hindi-English code-switching when used with Hindi-English bilinguals, which does not occur when speaking to monolingual speakers of Hindi. Since educated native speakers of Hindi use both a mixed and unmixed code in informal speech and writing, the proficiency guidelines for Hindi must reflect this aspect of sociolinguistic competence. The situation is almost paradoxical: Hindi-English code-switching indicates lesser proficiency in everyday, survival situations but greater proficiency in formal, professional settings.

In addition, the content/context in which Hindi is used needs to be elucidated. For instance, according to Gambhir, the Superior level functions in Hindi are mostly exercised in the areas of language, culture and literature, the Advanced level functions occur mostly in informal social situations, and the Intermediate functions occur in contact with uneducated monolingual native speakers of Hindi who have little or no contact with foreigners, particularly in urban areas.

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Finally, in addition to making accuracy statements regarding control of various phonological, morphosyntactic and discourse features of Hindi, statements regarding sociolinguistic competence will have to take into account the complexity of rules governing style according to the relative status, age, sex and relationship of the interlocutors as well as the formality/informality of the situation.

In order to decide which linguistic features should be expected to be fully, partially or conceptually controlled at which level, Gambhir suggests combining two different approaches, one based on experience as to what to expect in terms of functions, content/context and accuracy at what level, and the other based on an analysis of a large number of interviews at different levels. This combined approach requires a tentative formulation of level descriptions through analysis of actual interviews and supplementing missing data with observations based on experience.

The process is already under way. Hindi testers trained in administering the oral proficiency interview in ESL started the transfer by administering the interview in Hindi. They identified the best Hindi interviews, translated the questions asked in those interviews into English and met with experienced ESL testers to get feedback on elicitation techniques and assistance in rating the samples.

4.22. *The Case of Indonesian.* At the 1987 Indiana Symposium on the Evaluation of Language Proficiency, John Wolff of Cornell University reported that he attended an ESL tester training workshop and then conducted about twenty thirty-minute interviews ranging from Novice to Superior with students of Indonesian at Cornell. All interviews were transcribed word-for-word, presented to a small, select group of

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individuals at the AAS meeting and discussed with OPI experts from ACTFL and DLI with regard to their content and as to what they showed about the basic characteristics of students at different levels. The group also had an opportunity to listen to and discuss a number of government interviews in Indonesian with a government tester.

As a result of this preliminary work, Wolff does not think that there are any particular features of Indonesian that could not be measured by a common metric. even though Indonesianis significantly different from the more commonly taught West-European languages. Despite the fact that the grammar of Indonesian is based on a totally different set of principles than those on which most commonly taught Indo-European languages are based, there is no reason, according to Wolff, why the generic guidelines expressed in terms of functional abilities at different levels would not be applicable to Indonesian as well.

As the next step in the development of guidelines for Indonesian Wolff sees the determination of those features of phonology, grammar and vocabulary which can be associated with each state of proficiency in Indonesian. In addition, Wolff thinks that a determination needs to be made as to the candidate's ability to make use of the appropriate style, register and sociolinguistic rules of Indonesian. Wolff makes the point that these rules are quite rigid, and that Indonesians do not have a great amount of tolerance for deviation from the expected sociolinguistic norms. Even the simplest utterance must adhere to rules for acknowledging the relative social status of the conversational partners through appropriate use of various sociolinguistic rules such as forms of address, etc. As a result, a set of guidelines for testing students' communicative ability in Indonesian will have to

include specific statements regarding degree of control of these sociolinguistic rules at different levels of proficiency. Wolff makes the additional point that elicitation techniques will need to be elaborated in such a manner as to elicit routines which demonstrate mastery of sociolinguistic rules in various settings peculiar to the Indonesian culture.

In terms of actual need, Wolff thinks that the development of proficiency guidelines for Indonesian is a worthwhile endeavor for a number of reasons. First, Indonesia, the fifth largest country in the world, is one of the few colonial areas where the local language has truly become a national language. Secondly, although the total number of students taking Indonesian is not very large, they represent different levels of proficiency, and it is important to be able to assess their competence. As Wolff sees it, there are, however, a number of problems when it comes to testing a significant number of these individuals. These stem from the fact that Indonesian is largely taught by the linguist-native informant method. While linguists may have too many other professional responsibilities to devote much time to proficiency testing, native informants are typically temporarily employed and are not professional language teachers. Wolff sees a possible solution to this dilemma in the development of a semi-direct test of speaking proficiency which would be validated against the ACTFL interview. An alternative solution would be to adopt the government practice of conducting interviews with two testers: a native speaker trained to elicit a ratable speech sample, and a linguist experienced in both evaluation and elicitation techniques.

4.23. *The Case of Arabic.* According to McCarus (1987), the proficiency movement in Arabic started in the early eighties when teachers at the CASA program worked with an FSI tester in Cairo. A decimal system, such as 1.8, 2.5, 3.3 etc. was used to obtain gradations which correspond to the high, mid and low subdivisions of the present ACTFL system. Students were allowed to respond either in Modern Standard Arabic or in the colloquial dialect. Sociolinguistic features, gestures, and body language, among other features, were taken into account. The interview was used for diagnostic purposes.

As Arabists today are preparing to introduce proficiency testing and develop proficiency guidelines in Arabic, they are faced with defining the relationship of diglossia to oral proficiency testing and proficiency guidelines. Allen (in press) explains the problem as follows. The language used for oral communication in a given Arab community is one of a number of colloquial dialects which vary from country to country and from community to community and which represent the language that people learn at home. Geographically contiguous colloquial dialects are mutually comprehensible, but geographically separated ones are less so. As a result, in certain situations, a form of the standard written language, referred to as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is learned by Arabs in school, is used for oral communication. Thus, the colloquial is reserved for day-to-day usage, while MSA is generally restricted to formal situations such as lectures, newscasts, pan-Arab and international conferences.

This diglossic situation creates a major problem in proficiency testing. According to McCarus (1987), academic programs in the U.S. generally teach MSA, since very few programs can afford to teach one or more dialects as well. This results in a somewhat anomalous situation whereby a student

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might be an Intermediate-High or even an Advanced speaker when it comes to discussing politics, butbut only a Novice-High or Intermediate-Low when it comes to dealing with basic survival situations.

Two solutions have been proposed. One of them is to ignore the dialects and write the guidelines for MSA alone. The other solution is to choose, in addition to MSA, a major colloquial dialect, such as Egyptian, and write two sets of guidelines, one for MSA and one for the dialect.

Roger Allen and his associates at the University of Pennsylvania have received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to form a committee to establish proficiency guidelines for Arabic. After considering the advantages and disadvantages of the two solutions, the committee decided to write one set of guidelines. As a result of their work, a preliminary set of Arabic Guidelines was published in Al-ᶜArabiyya (1984). The next step, according to Allen (1987), would be to set up a measure of appropriateness of language usage and rate the candidate on his/her ability to use colloquial or MSA according to sociolinguistic rules adhered to by native speakers of Arabic. At the moment, however, the working solution for oral proficiency testing in Arabic, thus, is for the tester to conduct the interview in Modern Standard Arabic and to accept responses in MSA or in any colloquial dialect. Only at the Superior level is the examinee expected to demonstrate proficiency in MSA.

Allen freely admits that the solution of writing a preliminary set of guidelines, including those for speaking and listening, based on a single variety - MSA - does not reflect the natural use of Arabic, except under special circumstances, nevertheless MSA, potentially at least, is a means of communication between any two educated Arabs. In addition, this

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solution keeps Arabic in conformity with other languages for which guidelines have been developed thus far.

An alternative solution, according to Allen, would be to write guidelines for speaking and listening based on the colloquial dialects, and those for reading and writing based on the standard written language. This solution involves deciding which dialect(s) to choose, and the difficulty of implementing Arabic courses which would offer a combination of colloquial dialect with the standard written, a practice not currently in effect in most American universities, although the accepted solution at the Foreign Service Institute.

In addressing the question of accuracy in the language specific guidelines, McCarus (1987) makes the point that more research is needed in order to determine the developmental hierarchy of various types of constructions in Arabic, and that in addition to a global rating, there should also be separate ratings for accuracy, communicative skills and sociolinguistic competence for purposes of diagnostic feedback to the students.

4.24. *The Case of Chinese.* According to Ron Walton (1987), the initial attempt at writing Chinese language specific guidelines used German as a model. The members of the Chinese guidelines committee tried to find counterparts for German statements in Chinese. It soon became clear that this was not always possible. This experience provided one of the reasons for revising the generic guidelines.

According to Walton, one of the problems with adapting the guidelines to languages such as Chinese and Japanese is the fact that these languages require more time to reach a comparable level of proficie cy, especially in the reading/writing skills, than languages such as Spanish and

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French. This, in large part is due to the nature of the writing system. Walton makes the point that exposure to a writing system, such as Chinese, does not *per se* constitute meaningful input. For instance, a person who has spent some time in France will, in all probability, learn how to write items such as his/her name and address in French without training. In Chinese, however, training will be needed in order to be able to perform these simple written functions. This makes the achievement of even the Novice level in reading/writing contingent upon a fairly protracted period of instruction. Even with the refinement of the lower end of the continuum to include three subranges of Novice and Intermediate, it takes a long time for students to achieve any measurable proficiency at all.

Thus, in order to put students on the scale, the Chinese guidelines committee decided to make some compromises. As a result, the Chinese reading guidelines, unlike those forFrench, German, and Spanish,make a distinction between decoding (i.e. use of a dictionary) and fluent reading.

Another area of concern, according to Walton, is that the testing situation places some limitations on theelicitation of certain sociolinguistic behaviors in languages such as Chinese and Japanese whose cultures require certain behaviors which are vastly different from those common to most West-European languages. Thus, there is a need to both define these features and to design situations in which they might be elicited.

An additional problem described by Walton is that it may not be appropriate for a foreigner to speak to
a Chinese the way Chinese speak to each other, because the Chinese themselves expect certain behaviors of foreigners. How and whether to build that into proficiency guidelines is an unresolved question.

4.25. *The Case of African Languages.* Two significant developments took place with regard to extending proficiency concepts to the teaching and testing of African languages. Both projects build on the proficiency interview and the proficiency guidelines to suit the needs of their field as they see them.

In response to an acknowledged need in the African language field for developing competence and proficiency in African languages through clearer articulation of goals, improved materials, and instructor support, Roxana Ma Newton and her colleagues at Indiana University (1985) have developed proficiency guidelines for Hausa, Lingala and Swahili which are broadly modeled on the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. The guidelines include descriptions for five skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing, and sociocultural) and nine levels (from Novice-Low to Superior) for speaking and listening. There are five levels for reading/writing in Hausa and Swahili, but only three levels for reading/writing in Lingala where writing skills are of little practical relevance to foreigners. There are only four levels for sociocultural knowledge.

The speaking descriptors, based on Higgs and Clifford (1982), are divided into five categories These are: (1) phonology and intonation; (2) morphosyntax; (3) vocabulary; (4) fluency; and (5) communicative tasks/speech functions. The latter component was developed on the basis of responses to a questionnaire distributed to Africanists with experience in Africa and African students at Indiana University regarding the relative importance of a representative range of topics, situations, and functions in which an African language would be used instead of the local *lingua franca* such as English, French or Arabic.

According to Newman et al., the provisional guidelines for Hausa, Lingala, and Swahili are designed to serve as a guide and a check for teachers and learners of these languages by showing the necessary stages in the acquisition of functional competence in an African language. These guidelines are expected to undergo many alterations in the course of their implementation for teaching and for testing.

A related development in the field of African languages involving the ACTFL proficiency guidelines is the "profiling" model developed by Bennett and Biersteker (1987). This model, which grew out of a questionnaire for the evaluation of existing Swahili textbooks, was designed, according to its authors, to supplement the ACTFL global rating with a more detailed analysis of the candidate's performance for diagnostic purposes.

The proposed model is quite complex. It involves five media (aural/oral, reading/writing, lexical/traditional, emotive/pragmatic, and social/cultural), four modes (input, output, interactive, and abstract), three levels (word, sentence, and discourse) and attempts to evaluate language proficiency on a three-point scale for each intersection of media, mode, and level. Thus, descriptors for speaking skills are found at the intersection of oral plus output, reading skills at writing plus input, and writing skills at writing plus output. Prospective users of the model are urged to first obtain training in administering the ACTFL oral proficiency interview before expanding the latter to elicit additional data for profiling purposes. The authors go further to state that the model can be used to specify course objectives as well.

5. PROBLEMS WITH TESTER TRAINING IN THE LESS COMMONLY TAUGHT LANGUAGES

The original Testing Kit workshops held in 1979-1980 at the Foreign Service Institute with support from the U.S. Department of Education brought together interested academics with experienced government testers in a common effort to test the hypothesis that the proficiency guidelines developed, modified and validated over a thirty year period within the Federal Government had applicability in a traditional academic setting.

Seven years and ----- workshops training----- individuals in ----- languages later the answer should be clear. This does not mean that the generic guidelines are not subject to further modification as new languages representing still differing typologies are added, nor does it mean that all problems in developing compatible guidelines for additional languages and training individuals in their application in testing situations have been solved. Far from it. Let us expamine the situation from the perspective of less commonly and much less commonly taught languages.

5.1. Less Commonly Taught Languages

It was not until 198- that tester training became available in the less commonly taught languages. Languages in this category included Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Portuguese. The inclusion of a particular language in this list was, of course, arbitrary, and was simply a product of whether a U.S. government tester/trainer was available to conduct initial training and whether there was interest on the part of the academic community. In the case of the languages above, government trainers were available to conduct a number of initial workshops.

As a result, adequate numbers of testers in these languages were trained with new testers being constantly added to the list. In addition, through a series of tester trainer workshops conducted since 198--, ACTFL was able to terminate its dependence on government trainers and to develop its own cadre of academic trainers not only in the commonly taught languages, but also in Russian, Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic.

5.2. Much Less Commonly Taught Languages

Recent demands from the academic sector for training in some of the nearly 160 less commonly taught languages currently available at U.S. institutions of higher education boasting National Resource Centers in Foreign Languages and Area Studies are seriously straining our current national training capacity. For most of these languages no trainer is available. This results in serious problems for not only the academic community but also for the U.S. Government in general and for the U.S. Department of Education in particular. New Federal legislation and companion regulations which are to be published for public comment early in the summer of 1987 mandate proficiency testing for these languages. This has immediate implications for tester training as well as adaptation of proficiency guidelines to these languages.

Early training of Peace Corps oral proficiency testers by ETS involving FSI trainers was conducted in English for all of the requisite languages. Unfortunately, no follow-up was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of such training. More recently, a number of academics have been trained in one language while they are preparing to test in another (e.g., Hindi, Indonesian, Hausa, Hebrew, Polish, ???)

Whereas the ideal training situation is target language specific, cross-language training makes it possible to reach

languages otherwise inaccessible. Such training will not only extend proficiency testing to all of the much less commonly taught languages, but it will perforce provide us with a significant research opportunity.

Questions of interrater reliability are normally studied within specific languages. Yet, if the generic guidelines are truly generic and the training procedures are truly standardized, both rating and elicitation should be standard across different languages. The opportunity before us is to study interlanguage reliability in a way heretofore not possible. A properly designed research project could provide us for the first time with empirical evidence on both the reliability of ratings across languages by the same individuals and the degree of generality among the various language specific guidelines.

Another valuable procedure for testing in many less commonly taught languages has been used by U.S. Government testers for some time. This procedure involves the presence of a tester certified in one or more languages (preferably related to the target language) and an educated native speaker/informant of that language. With appropriate direction and experience in observation during the testing of a candidate reliable ratings can be assigned by the testing team. As in the case of cross-language training, joint testing also will provide us with important research opportunities.

A research agenda for the future might include the following:

(a) a study of interrater reliability between government testers who use the ILR guidelines and academic testers who use the ACTFL guidelines in different languages;

(b) an examination of differences in testing one's own students as opposed to testing someone else's;

(c) an investigation of differences between native and nonnative interviewers particularly at the higher levels;

(d) a study of interrater reliability at different levels of proficiency both within and across languages;

(e) development of sample audio- and/or videotapes of oral interview tests at all levels with an accompanying manual explaining the procedure and rating for each language in which guidelines and trained testers are available to familiarize interested teachers and administrators with the ACTFL interview.

6. POLICY ISSUES

Proficiency testing in the less commonly taught languages presents challenges which get right at the heart of a range of policy issues, some of which face the commonly taught languages as well. There are issues that face the federal, state and local governments, the professional associations, institutions of postsecondary education, and the consumers in business and industry.

New federal legislation mandating competency based language training and testing, backed up by federal regulations affecting ninety-three National Resource Centers in Foreign Language and Area Studies at fifty-three premier institutions of higher education involving some one hundred and sixty less commonly taught languages presents monumental challenges.

As universities seek to come into compliance there will be intense competition for the limited training resources currently available. The U.S. Department of Education, the academy, and the major relevant professional associations,

especially ACTFL, will need to join hands in a cooperative venture to set realistic priorities and develop the necessary guidelines.

Which language will be designated for priority development and who will receive initial tester training? Will the tester training be language specific or through English or another language? Will interim procedures need to be developed to satisfy federal regulations until a sufficient cadre of testing specialists is available? Will training be extended to the pre-collegiate level for selected languages, and will teachers at that level receive training? Where will the required research on proficiency testing be carried out and by whom?

What will be the role of the new federally authorized language resource centers in the area of proficiency testing? Could a small number of such regionally located centers assume responsibility for testing and tester training in their regions? How would the relationships and responsibilities of the privately funded Johns Hopkins Language Resource Center and the National Resource Centers be defined and coordinated?

The answers to these and other policy questions will, of course, require a cooperative effort by the affected constituencies. It is possible now, however, to sketch a broad outline of some of the options and factors that will influence them.

It would seem reasonable to use recent enrollment data as a general guidepost in establishing priorities. Decisions made by universities to offer courses in the less commonly taught and much less commonly taught languages as well as individual decisions by students to study these languages already represent a prioritization, albeit implicit, and a decision that a particular language has relative political, economic, or cultural value, and is worth teaching and studying.

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Since language specific tester training does not currently exist in all but a handful of the less commonly taught languages, it is likely that most startup training will be through English or another language known to the prospective tester, e.g., English or French for Asian and African specialists. In some cases it will be possible to conduct training in a language that is related to the target language such as training in Russian in order to test in other Slavic languages. There will also be situations in which testers in one language will work together with native speakers of the target language in teams. The experienced tester may know the subject language only minimally, or may know a related language, thus being able to understand it without being able to speak it, but is able to work with the native speaker in a capacity similar to the former linguist/informant method of language instruction — guiding the informant through the interview and making decisions as to the final rating. It is also possible that semi-direct tests of oral proficiency will be developed and validated against the oral interview for those (much) less commonly taught languages for which maintaining a cadre of trained testers will not be possible.

In his action plan for language pedagogy, Lambert (1984) listed the following as a top priority in a national agenda for transforming language instruction: "Develop a common metric that is language performance-oriented and calibrated for all levels of fluency" (p. 92). In describing a proposed agenda for a National Foundation for International Studies Lambert (1986) further proposes that "The Foundation should help create and sustain a national foreign language resource center to assist in the upgrading of the national foreign language teaching system by conducting and coordinating the needed research; preparing new teaching materials as needed; training teachers;

administering intensive teaching programs; providing instruction in languages not taught elsewhere; articulating the various levels of instruction; diffusing the results of research and experimentation in new teaching technologies; evaluating teaching methodologies and programs; and managing a national proficiency test network to administer the common metric" (p. 25)

In reauthorizing Title VI of the Higher Education Act (formerly NDEA Title VI), the Congress established a new Secion 603, Foreign Language Resource Centers. These centers "shall serve as resources to improve the capacity to teach and learn foreign languages effectively." Activities carried out by such centers may include "the development and application of proficiency testing appropriate to an educational setting" and "the training of teachers in the administration and interpretation of proficiency tests..." (The Congressional Record, 1986, September 22).

In establishing these Foreign Language Resource Centers Congress anticipated difficulties faced by individual teachers and institutions by charging these centers with responsibility for both direct testing and training teachers to test. A small number of such centers, strategically located in the U.S with regional responsibilities, could significantly advance the national capacity to meet the new federal requirements for proficiency testing and competency based language training. It is also through such centers that the mo.e limited needs at the pre-collegiate level can be adequately met.

In discussing the research needs Byrnes (1987) notes that "some of the greatest benefits of the increasing work being undertaken in academia with oral proficiency testing may well lie beyond the areas that come to mind most readily, such as placement, syllabus scope and sequence, course and program

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evaluation, entry and exit requirements, and required
proficiency levels of TAs or teachers." Rather she sees as the
most exciting prospect of the proficiency movement ":ts
potential for giving language practitioners a framework within
which to observe and evaluate the development of
second-language proficiency in their students" (p. 113).

If we are to look at the oral proficiency interview not as
just a test, but as second-language data capable of yielding
important insights into second-language acquisition processes,
then we will need language specialists able to engage in
second-language acquisition research, both theoretical and
classroom-oriented. This research needs to proceed along many
different lines such as ultimate level of proficiency
attainable under a given set of conditions (Lowe, 1985;
Natelson and Allen, n.d.; Pica, 1983; Swain, 1985), learner
variables (Beebe, 1983; Bialystok, 1983), input variables
(Chaudron, 1983; Seliger, 1983), the relationship between L2
acquisition and L2 instruction (Lightbown, 1983), the effects
of formal as opposed to informal exposure on different aspects
of language performance i.e., grammar, vocabulary, fluency,
sociolinguistic and pragmatic features, etc.

In order to perform such much needed research, the
prospective researchers will require a background in
second-language acquisition, research design, and statistics.
Such a multidisciplinary background is currently not obtainable
in our highly compartmentalized foreign language departments
with their traditional emphasis on literature and linguistics.
Thus, if second-language acquisition research is to extend from
ESL into commonly and especially into uncommonly taught
languages, the training of language specialists has to extend
beyond its current boundaries of literature and linguistics to
include the disciplines mentioned above. An alternative

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solution for performing language acquisition research in languages in which researchers with the above background do not exist is to cooperate with other departments to form interdisciplinary research team which in addition to a specialist in an uncommonly taught language would also include psycholinguists, educational psychologists, statisticians, and psychometricians.

7. CONCLUSION

This chapter attempts to place the development and application of proficiency guidelines to the less commonly taught languages in broader perspective. The authors have sought to highlight the significance of work in the area of further development and refinement of the generic guidelines from their initial application to commonly taught West-European languages to accomodate an increasing number of languages with widely varying typologies as less commonly and much less commonly taught languages are brought within the scope of the proficiency movement. The case is made to support the notion that guidelines are precisely guidelines, that they are dynamic, and subject to modification as experience with new languages representing other linguistic typologies is encountered.

Incipient experience with the much less commonly taught languages reveals serious problelms in training testers and suggests imaginative and productive alternatives which hold promise for research as well.

Recent legislative action has mandated competency based language programs and proficiency testing for the commonly as well as less commonly taught languages. Language resource centers will bear special responsibilities in this area and

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will spearhead cooperative planning and policy development in
the foreign language field in the future.

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Materials Development for the Proficiency-Oriented Classroom

This article was chosen to demonstrate what the application of the proficiency guidelines can mean to the classroom teacher, for his or her behavior in the classroom, for the use of materials, and for the evaluation and selection of materials that are in agreement with the ACTFL proficiency guidelines.

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The article is taken directly from Foreign Language in the Classroom and Beyond. Charles J. James, ed. (ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series) Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company, 1985.

Materials Development for the Proficiency-Oriented Classroom

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Introduction

Since the publication of the *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines* (1) in 1982, much has been done to disseminate the idea of proficiency-based teaching throughout the profession. With the help of government funding, ACTFL has sponsored numerous familiarization and training workshops. Institutions, both secondary and postsecondary, have allocated funds to train their teachers in the administration and rating of the Oral Proficiency Interview. Conference sessions have explored the many implications of the proficiency-based curriculum, and the pedagogical literature has begun to reflect a growing awareness on the part of foreign language educators that proficiency goals in the various skills should be at the heart of foreign language programs. Indeed, significant changes are already evident in the area of textbook publication, as authors and editors begin to reorient materials in accordance with the proficiency guidelines.

Such widespread interest in proficiency has naturally raised many questions about curriculum, course design, course content, and about materials appropriate for use in the proficiency-oriented classroom. This last question is a crucial one since it is clearly not enough to establish program objectives and priorities without also determining what is actually to be done in the classroom and what types of materials are best suited for the

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development of proficiency in the various skills. We will deal with this and related concerns in this chapter.

While pedagogical materials always need to be tailored to the personality ᵒᶠ the instructor and to the collective personality of a given group of learners, specific organizing principles also need to be followed if we are to be successful in developing foreign language proficiency. Face and content validity in tests are intrinsically linked to face and content validity in courses. It is therefore important for us to examine textbooks, to influence future directions of published texts, and to introduce the types of materials in and out of the classroom that will neither negate nor conflict with the established goals of a proficiency-oriented program.

The ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines ⸻

The original oral proficiency descriptions compiled by agencies of the U.S. government (Liskin-Gasparro, 8) were based on observations of native and nonnative speakers of a language in real settings in which they were functioning. The basic orientation, then, was toward natural language use on the job rather than abstract theory. When they were adapted for academic use as the ACTFL guidelines, the rating descriptions respected this orientation. The three criteria for language use in the context of this observable reality are *function, context/content,* and *accuracy,* what is known as the Functional Trisection. The descriptions of each proficiency level include statements about each of these three areas. *Function* refers to the task that an individual is able to accomplish linguistically (asking questions, giving information, describing, narrating, stating and supporting opinion, etc.); *context* or *content* describes the setting in which these functions are carried out; *accuracy* refers to the degree of correctness (grammar, pronunciation, intonation, syntax, etc.) with which the message is delivered. The real language ability of an individual is assessed on the basis of these three factors, with each factor increasing in scope as one moves up the proficiency scale. A corollary is that the assessment is global, that is, based on a holistic view of the speech or writing act. It is with these three principles in mind—the total language act in real situations with regard to function, context, and accuracy—that we must evaluate and create appropriate materials for the language class. Furthermore, materials can be considered appropriate only if their use leads to the development of assessable proficiency.

Prerequisites for Material Creation and Use ⸻

As we prepare to reevaluate teaching materials, we must first reassess our own attitudes. We may, in fact, need to acquire a number of new skills that

will enable us to move more effectively toward teaching for proficiency. The guidelines, and particularly the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) procedures, can be very useful in restructuring not only teacher attitudes but also student thinking.

The first area of consideration is that of error tolerance versus error correction. All teachers know how to correct, and most of us have probably developed the habit of correcting student speech systematically. The greatest fear many teachers have is that the absence of immediate correction will develop incorrect patterns of speech, which will be impossible to change at a later stage. With the obvious stress on accuracy stated in the guidelines, error correction from the earliest stages is clearly a must if students are to develop good habits. However, there should also be a time when students are allowed to use the language creatively without constant intervention from the "expert." When is it appropriate to correct in order to prevent the acquisition of bad habits, and when should we refrain from correction in order to allow th development of creative language use? To phrase the question more precisely, when should correction be immediate and when should it be delayed?

If we accept the concepts of skill-getting and skill-using advanced by Rivers (12, 13), we arrive at a partial answer to this question. Ideally, each class period should contain elements of both skill-getting and skill-using. If we organize lesson plans according to these two principles, we can also decide ahead of time which exercises and activities are designed to give students the skills they need to communicate (grammar explanations, pronunciation drills, controlled structural exercises, vocabulary study, simulated communication, etc.). During this phase, systematic correction (done positively) is clearly in order. During follow-up work (skill-using), which includes communicative activities, small group work, games, role playing, and simulations, is the time when students should be given the chance to "try their wings" and enter into meaningful communication with their classmates or instructor. It is also the time when, while listening to their speech production, the teacher is advised to keep his or her distance and to note errors for correction at a later point. Delayed correction can occur after the activity has been completed or in a subsequent lesson. Intervention should occur only if misunderstanding is preventing students from accomplishing their assigned tasks.

Skill-getting and skill-using should not, however, be seen as a set of separate and distinct activities. In fact, Rivers (12) warns against just such a dichotomy. "Skill-using activities . . . should spring naturally and inevitably from the types of activities engaged in for skill-getting" (p. 56). Although, as teachers, we are well aware of the division and will even plan for it, smooth transitions from one to the other should give students a sense of coherence and cohesion. How we plan our daily lessons is crucial to the outcome and cannot be overestimated in the development of foreign language proficiency.

Modification of Teacher Behaviors —————————————

The Oral Proficiency Interview procedures contain many basic rules that may help teachers modify some of their classroom behaviors. In the interview, the interviewer is instructed not to interrupt students when they are speaking, to refrain from correcting; to refrain from supplying information, missing words, and correct grammar forms; to refrain from filling the silences that occur because students are thinking about what they wish to say. In other words, while meaningful communication is going on, such communication must be able to proceed unimpeded, and the flow of ideas must not be interrupted. During the interview, students demonstrate their ability to cope linguistically without the traditional teacher aids normally supplied in the classroom. They are working with an interviewer who is patient, who responds in a natural way to what they say, who may offer encouragement through facial expressions but does not put words in their mouths or dominate the conversation. Teachers who have become interviewers often comment on the influence that interview behaviors have had on them in their dealings with students in the classroom. In particular, they have noted an increased willingness to restrain the impulse to intervene, and although they may still cringe inwardly at the errors they hear, they have observed a marked decrease in student fears and inhibitions.

As has been stated earlier, this is not to suggest that we ignore errors, but rather that we find a time more appropriate for their correction than in the middle of a conversation. Delayed correction has the additional advantage of being addressed to the entire class rather than to a particular student. The most important result of this type of behavior modification on the part of the teacher is that it gives students the kind of freedom they would experience when actually speaking the language in the target culture. This freedom will keep them from becoming too dependent on the teacher and will teach them that they have available many of their own resources, that they may know much more than they suspected, and that they can trust themselves to function when they are called upon to do so. Once established, such self-confidence will inevitably spill over into the rest of their language learning.

Another behavioral adjustment that teachers are advised to make is in the type of language they use with their students in class. Typical "teacher talk," replete with statements such as "very good," "très bien," or "sehr gut," evaluates language rather than showing interest in ideas; it tends to be artificial and is not likely to be encountered by students in conversations with people in real situations. What kind of language role model should the teacher be? The following considerations may be helpful in evaluating ourselves as language models.

1. *Rate of speech.* Are we consistently slowing down in an exaggerated manner, giving students the impression that this is the way in which the language is spoken in the target culture? When is a slower rate of speech appropriate and when is it not? Perhaps the decision can once again be made according to the principles of skill-getting and skill-using. When we are teaching, i.e., appealing explicitly to the analytical side of student behavior, we may slow down to be sure that students grasp what we want them to learn. When we are *communicating* with them, however, a normal rate of speech should be the norm. After all, our goal is not to teach a version of the foreign language that can be used only between student and teacher but rather between a student and any native speaker of the language.

2. *Level of language.* Particularly at beginning levels, a common tendency is to oversimplify; to avoid colloquial speech, as well as structures and vocabulary that have not been taught; to restrict verb forms to the present tense; to use what some have called baby talk. In fact, this again represents "teacher talk," a result of our concern about helping students that may ultimately hinder them in the real world. Although they may not be ready to use a higher level of language; the more exposure they have to it, the more likely they will be able to understand what is happening when they are put into the real setting of the target culture. This is not to suggest that we move so far beyond their language abilities that communication breaks down, but it is to suggest that even if they have not explicitly learned to use the past tense, for example, we also must refrain from using it.

3. *Remodeling.* The procedure we have all developed of giving back answers in a more polished and grammatically correct form may be appropriate during the learning phase, when we are trying to instill accurate use of structures and vocabulary. However, it should be used in conversations only when it is natural to do so. In "real" speech, we use remodeling not to express approval or disapproval of the linguistic patterns used by the speaker but rather to emphasize or express surprise, disagreement, or another form of commentary on the message that is being transmitted. For example: "Yesterday, I finally told him what I thought about his idea!" Remodeling to show surprise might consist of the following response: "You *actually* told him what you thought of his idea?" First, the word *actually* adds emphasis to the idea of surprise. Second, the repetition of the exact words confirms the feeling of surprise. What the remodeling does not do, however, is comment on the grammar, syntax, or vocabulary used by the speaker. For the teacher, avoidance of the remodeling habit might also indicate a greater confidence in the student to communicate. It is the recognition, at the right time, that communication took place, that the student was successful, that he or she understood the message. Positive reinforcement is much more important in the long run than the distressing

attitude that correctness *always* takes precedence over the content of the message. The risk we run in failing to acknowledge real communicaticn when it takes place is that students begin to feel that it does not really matter what they say as long as they say it correctly. The result will probably be neutral speech, devoid of real personal meaning, devoid of personal commitment to the message, the reluctance to say anything meaningful because "I don't know how to say what I want to say, so I'll opt for what is simple and correct."

4. *Complete sentences.* Teacher insistence that studen*s always respond in complete sentences may add to the artificiality of the language produced in the classroom. Once again, complete sentences may be appropriate when students are just beginning to learn a new structure, when they are in the process of skill-getting. However, if we analyze everyday speech, we find that all of us readily use sentence fragments, we do not always repeat the if-clause of a conditional sentence, and we often respond in short utterances. No one is shocked when this occurs in one's native language, but few of us seem to have the same tolerance in the language classroom.

Much of the behavior that has been discussed in the preceding paragraphs is the result of our fear that the student's experience with the foreign language will somehow be incomplete or inadequate if we do not systematically correct, remodel, and so forth. However, we may in fact be teaching students to be unwilling to take a chance, to refuse to speak up unless they have formulated the correct sentences in their minds ahead of the speech act. The spontaneity and improvisation necessary to real communication can be stifled at the outset and can leave students handicapped in ways that we never imagined or intended.

The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that we, as teachers, need to increase our tolerance for error without, at the same time, losing our concern for accuracy. Perhaps the only way we will accomplish this is to decide when error tolerance is appropriate and when systematic correction is in order. A concurrent benefit may be that we will teach students to be willing to be creative, to try out what they have learned, to explore new word combinations, and to be willing to respond honestly rather than with standard, memorized phrases. The same principles apply to writing skills, where we often reward those students who try nothing new but keep to what they know to be absolutely correct, leaving their concern for real communication inhibited or stilled altogether.

A close reading of the guidelines can help us to determine where error tolerance is appropriate, which errors we should be willing to accept at which level, and which structures and vocabulary should no longer be subject to error. It is clear that the Novice speaker will make many errors in the few verb conjugations and tenses he or she has learned. At this level, where we might not be tolerant of errors in certain lexical items or memorized phrases, our patience should be greater for other elements which we

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know are going to stabilize at a later stage in language acquisition. At the Intermediate Level, we should become less and less tolerant of student inability to ask questions correctly or to accurately use the present tense of the most high-frequency verbs. Our tolerance of tense error may, however, still be fairly high at this level. Accuracy in verb tenses becomes imperative once we move to the Advanced Level. Although errors are still to be expected, the commonly used verbs and tenses are presumed to be controlled. However, conditional sentences may only just be emerging, so we will want to give them a chance to develop more fully before we become exigent. Immediate and delayed correction in the skill-getting and skill-using phases will eventually increase language accuracy while at the same time encouraging students to convey personally authentic messages.

The nature and ground rules of the Oral Proficiency Interview permit students to express themselves without interference or help from the interviewer. Experience has shown that many students are surprised at their ability to converse with someone for ten to twenty minutes and that they are able to do so without teacher prompting. They are surprised at what they know, what they can say and do with language, how relatively easy it is to have a "real" conversation. The interviewer is the one who knows how "real" the conversation was, but regardless of this judgment, the student is left with a positive feeling. Perhaps this is what students should be helped to feel at the end of the class period. Rather than leaving the class with the echo of everything they did wrong, they will remember what they did well, and perhaps they will gain the confidence to be creative, to make the best use of whatever "chunks" of language they know, and to be willing to venture into unknown territory. They will have *learned* what they need to improve, they will *know* what they can already do well.

Materials Development and Use

Once we fully accept and put into practice the idea that everything we do with the language must be authentic, we are in a better position to create the appropriate materials that will attain our stated objectives.

The idea of materials development immediately raises protestations of insufficient available time. Whether we teach at the secondary or post-secondary levels, all of us, for different reasons, suffer from time constraints that may keep us from acting on the many ideas we have. Therefore, the first priority should be to examine materials already available to us, materials we have already acquired that we can modify without undue additional work.

Although the most obvious source of class content and ideas is the textbook itself, using it as a tool to be adapted to the individual's style of teaching rather than as a prescriptive set of inflexible rules is a basic step in the movement toward a proficiency-oriented classroom.

Unfortunately, the greater part of our language curriculum and the lesson plan is still tied to the book and grammatical ordering rather than structured according to functions or task universals. Much has been said and written to discourage such textbook dependency, yet little has in fact been done to change it. Hammerly (5, p. 201), recognizing the problem, suggests that more harm than good comes from reliance on textbooks:

> One of the most harmful factors in a second language program is excessive reliance on textbooks. Textbooks, unfortunately, tend to dominate second language teaching. They are always there, setting an unreasonably fast pace, always open, interfering with the development of the audiolingual skills and reinforcing the wrong notion that *the* language is what is found in books. The belief that a second language can be learned from textbooks is most damaging to second language learning and needs to be eliminated. Much would be gained by banning textbooks from the second language classroom, reducing them to homework and laboratory workshops subordinated to cassette tape recordings.

What this seemingly extreme position suggests is that teacher attitudes toward textbooks must be changed and that the place of texts in the learning process needs to be reevaluated.

A brief synopsis of how most textbooks come into being may be helpful in placing their use into the right perspective. Most authors decide to write a textbook because they have seen serious inadequacies in the books they have used themselves. Whether these inadequacies are real or perceived is, of course, open to debate. Nevertheless, authors have an idea of how something that is already on the market could be improved, they present a prospectus and sample chapters to various publishers, and if their ideas seem to be sufficiently original, they succeed in getting a contract. At the outset, authors may be very optimistic and even idealistic about the extent of their anticipated accomplishments. As they begin the task of writing, however, they discover that if anyone is ever going to see the book, if it is to be completed, if it is going to be used in the classroom, many compromises will have to be made. Acting in good faith, both publishers and authors are concerned not only with the pedagogical soundness of their text but also with the remuneration to be obtained from its adoptions. They hope their work will be recognized as meritorious and will therefore reward them tangibly for the many months or years they have spent on its preparation. Those who are most influential in effecting compromises and modifications in manuscripts are the reviewers, i.e., the teachers who have been called upon to comment on the work as it is being produced. This is where teachers in the profession can exercise a great deal of influence, but this is precisely the area in which they often choose to exercise it the least. Many teachers, although they may have very good

ideas about how texts might be changed, never bother to convey these ideas to the publisher or the authors. Those teachers who are reviewers know how much influence they can exert on the form the final product will have when the text is published. But a high percentage of teachers adheres to a policy of noninvolvement, which may have the following consequences: (1) many good ideas do not find their way into textbooks; (2) textbook reviewing is done by a select few who, no matter how competent, cannot accurately reflect the viewpoints and ideas of everyone in the profession; (3) this minority, working with authors and publishers, determines the types of texts that are likely to appear on the market; (4) although every effort is made to obtain representative reviews, it is possible that this minority may, at times, be either somewhat conservative or perhaps too liberal, or one that is particularly obsessed by some of the fears discussed previously.

It is not our intention to belittle contributions made by many of the excellent manuscript reviewers who do their work conscientiously and who are informed about the latest developments in language pedagogy. The point is that the sampling may be too small, that it may be prejudiced in one direction or another, and that many good ideas can be lost because not enough different people are involved in the process. Both publishers and authors are very sensitive to the demands of the market, and they seek as much feedback as possible. They may reject some ideas and accept others, but they must obtain the approval of as many teachers as possible in order to sell the book and to disseminate the pedagogical principles that they espouse and find to be valid.

Who is really "responsible" for the final product, the textbook that finally appears on the market? The publishers and authors, of course, but perhaps more important the people in the teaching profession who have expressed their needs and ideas. Too often, this aspect of textbook production is overlooked, and the result is criticism of publishers and particularly of authors. Reluctance to use the influence we all possess with respect to published materials may result in texts that are not particularly suited to our needs. However, every textbook must be looked upon as a flexible tool designed to help us, not restrict us, in our teaching. We, therefore, need to examine a text very carefully before deciding whether or not it is appropriate and, more important, whether it can be sufficiently modified to fit the objectives set forth in the guidelines.

What are the essential components in the development of proficiency, and what indications can we get from a textbook that it indeed includes these components? One must remember that a textbook is a commercial venture and that much will be done in order to enhance the sales figures. Claims made in publicity materials should be verified by teachers through a close reading of the preface *and* the text itself. In some cases, claims may be justified to a certain degree, but it is also possible that they are greatly exaggerated.

With the rapid spread of proficiency, the claim most commonly made is that a textbook or program will lead to a specified level of proficiency. This point is worth examination since it should be remembered that textbooks themselves *do not* lead to proficiency. The development of proficiency in any skill area can only be accomplished by the teacher through a judicious choice of materials that will support, not contradict, what is being done in the class.

Assessment of textbooks

Having examined the claims made by authors and publishers, one should be careful to peruse each component of the textbook. Just as a publisher must evaluate the complete manuscript before giving an author a contract, teachers must take the time to examine the entire book carefully before making a choice. What should be considered to determine whether the text in question supports the idea of proficiency development and accurate communication of messages? The following guidelines may be useful in making a fair assessment of any text and in modifying it as necessary.

Vocabulary. Are all of the vocabulary group (foods, etc.) limited to a list of generic terms, or do they include possi ...ies for students to express their *real* preferences? Must students say that they like ham and that they eat it often even if they do not? Are they given real cho es or are differences of personality and taste not taken into account? This is a task that falls once again on the teacher who must be aware of the desire in every individual to express personal preference. When asked for information by a student, responses such as "We will get to this later" or "You'll find this out in the next chapter" or "Let's not worry about food right now, we'll get to it next week" suggest that knowledge can be compartmentalized and that our minds function the way chapters are organized in a book.

How useful is generic vocabulary in real life? Can students really go into a restaurant in France, Germany, or Spain and order "meat"? It is clear that any one book cannot reflect the preferences of all the students who may use the text. However, it is possible for the book to include activities and exercises that require students to find out how to talk about their real preferences. They may do this simply by asking the instructor, using a dictionary, or asking other students. If such exercises do not exist, it is up to the teacher to add them. It is important that students be given sufficient vocabulary to really be able to order a meal and to really get what they ordered. However, a commonly voiced complaint is that authors present too much vocabulary in their attempt to account for individual differences. To achieve a better balance agreeable to everyone, it would perhaps be advisable to start thinking, from the beginning of language study, in terms of personal vocabulary lists. Students can be asked to keep a notebook in

which they write lexical items and expressions that they want to learn and use, words and expressions that have personal meaning for them. In addition to listing these items, students may be asked to use the words in at least two contexts. Once they have written their sentences or short paragraphs, they can be asked to record these on a cassette tape. Both the notebooks and the cassettes will be checked periodically by the teacher. The notebooks may also include a special section in which students list English words they want to have translated by the teacher. Apart from the personalized list, students will, of course, be held responsible for a core group of vocabulary items common to everyone in the class. To ensure that real use will be made of both categories of items, teachers should include both in their oral and written tests.

Another consideration when looking at vocabulary is whether it is current and of high frequency and whether it includes functional items that are applicable to many contexts. Other than grammatical constructions, much of what is first acquired by students is memorized as lexical items. Students may not necessarily know how to generalize grammatically on the expression or they may not know how to conjugate a verb in the conditional tense, but they may have learned to use a set of expressions (such as polite requests) that allows them to communicate without having the ability to analyze. This is particularly true of idiomatic expressions, conversational fillers, ways of agreeing and disagreeing, and so forth. When students list words and expressions they would like to learn in their personal vocabulary notebooks, they are defining what is high frequency to them. Because most teachers and authors are no longer teenagers or may not have teenagers in the home, instructors will not always know what, in lexical terms, is of most immediate importance to their students. For example, teachers may know that Michael Jackson is at the top of the charts, but what vocabulary do students use to express their liking for the singer?

Another consideration when studying an author's use of vocabulary is the extent to which it allows students to express feelings. Is everything limited to statements without the possibility of commentary? If expression of feelings is possible, does it exist only in extremes—love or hate, always or never—or are shades and nuances possible?

Does the initial exposure to a new vocabulary group reflect the immediate interests and concerns of American students, allowing them to deal with their own environment, or does it lead them immediately into the unknown spheres of the target culture? Since we know that most people prefer to talk about themselves before looking at others, we must capitalize on this egocentric attitude. For example, when dealing with education and studies, does the text first teach students to describe their own experiences in school, their own course work and school system, leading them secondly to the description of the educational system in the target culture, or is it the reverse? We strongly support the argument that a language

learner is more likely to remember vocabulary and structures if they are of immediate relevance. In the long run, students will be able to cope better with the foreign environment if they have first defined their own.

Finally, is vocabulary ordered to move from the concrete to the abstract? The proficiency descriptions clearly indicate that Novice and Intermediate speakers are most comfortable with concrete reality; the abstract does not become a major factor until the Advanced and Superior levels. Because abstractions are more difficult to deal with even in one's native language, it is reasonable to assume that they will develop at a later stage in the language acquisition process.

Grammar sequencing and explanations. Given what Novice- and Intermediate-Level speakers will need in order to function more or less effectively in the language, it is important to consider the question of grammar sequencing and explanations in textbooks. First-year texts that delay use of the past tense until the latter part of the book can be extremely limiting. Although control of the past tenses is not expected until the Advanced Level, it is difficult to create with the language when one is limited to the present tense. Equally annoying are explanations that are so in-depth that they create unnecessary complications, hindering rather than helping students in their attempts to communicate.

Does the textbook treat students as intelligent people or does it patronize them and make assumptions that students cannot handle a given topic, that they are all intellectually underdeveloped, that they cannot handle the unexpected? In other words, is the text intelligently done, presenting challenges while at the same time assuming that students are capable of meeting the challenges? Underestimation of students either by the authors or by the instructors is a self-fulfilling prophecy. If we believe students *cannot* do it, it is very likely that they *will not* do it. Establishing the proper, positive environment will not solve all of our problems. But real learning is more likely to take place in a positive environment.

Exercise types and activities. Do exercises lead to real communication or does the book stop short of skill-using? Are exercises contextualized simply to give us the illusion of reality, or are they in fact contextualized? Is there a chance for students to become acquainted with new structures through some simple transformation exercises that have no need to be disguised as anything else? Are these drills followed by cognitive exercises to reinforce structures? Are the cognitive exercises contextualized and personalized? If they are not, is it easy enough for teachers to transform them to give them more meaning and relevance? One of the most typical problems in exercises is that they are composed of a series of non sequiturs, unrelated statements that not only demand manipulation of the language but also require considerable mental acrobatics.

Perhaps one of the reasons why students do not answer our questions

or follow along easily in exercises is that we are asking them to do something that is simply not a normal process for the human mind. Consider the following exchange, for example, taken from an Oral Proficiency Interview. The sample is translated from the French.

Question: Where did you spend your last vacation, Paul?
Answer: In California.
Question: What did you do in California?
Answer: I went to Disneyland and I went to the beach.
Question: What is your sister like?
[The question had to be repeated twice before Paul answered it.]

The first part of this exchange is   very natural one because there is follow-up in the same context. The last question, however, led to a breakdown in communication because Paul was still thinking about his vacation in California. Since his sister was not with him on this trip (we found this out later), she was not uppermost in his mind and it took him considerable time to reorient his thinking. Furthermore, we discovered that Paul had no difficulty talking about his sister. His hesitation was not due to inadequacies in his language but rather to the required mental readjustment when the context was changed too abruptly.

The Oral Proficiency Interview, simulating a real conversation, teaches us to avoid this type of disconnected discourse and to change contexts more naturally as we would in real conversations. The technique to accomplish this can be applied easily to textbook exercises. A grammar transformation drill containing ten unrelated items (sentences, questions, etc.) can be transformed to allow follow-up on a particular topic. In many instances it suffices to establish the theme in the directions and to define the characters participating in the activities presented in the exercise. For example, instead of giving ten sentences to be put into the past tense, the directions could read:

The Dupont family is sitting around the dinner table discussing the activities of the day. As each member of the family is being questioned, supply the answers using the elements in parentheses.

Model: What did you do today, Susan? (to have / very bad day)
          I had a very bad day.

1. What happened? (to lock / keys in the car)
   (I locked my keys in the car.)
2. What did you do? (to come home / to get the spare keys)
   (I came home and got the spare keys.)

The questioning of Susan can continue if one wishes before focusing on another member of the family. It should be noted that the model question does not elicit the typical exercise answer, but rather a natural conversational answer. This helps impress upon students that questions often lead to unexpected answers that are nevertheless understood in context by both conversational partners. For example, the question "What time is it?" will not necessarily lead to "It's three o'clock." The answer could just as easily be "Oh, my goodness, it's late, I've got to run!"

Real language use. The next important thing to look for in a text is whether or not real language use follows transformational exercises. Activities should involve simulations demanding the transmittal of information in a meaningful context. In the past, textbooks have unfortunately stopped before this most essential step in proficiency development. Do the activities require students to simply describe the situation or do they in fact make them carry out a specific task linguistically? For example; is the activity limited to describing what has to be done if one wants to send a package airmail from Paris to New York, or is the student required to role-play the situation with the teacher or another student playing the part of the post office employee? Too often, when we are short of time, this is precisely what we leave out of the classroom because we feel that it is more important to "cover" the material as presented in the textbook and to prepare students for the discrete-point achievement exams typical of most courses. If the textbook does not contain any such activities, as many now do, it is relatively simple for the teacher to invent them. The model for situations is again supplied by the Oral Proficiency Interview. At every proficiency level except Novice and ILR Levels 4 and 5, the interviewee is asked to get into, through, and out of a situation described in his or her native language on a situation card. For American students, this card will be in English. The reason for this is that we do not wish to give away either the vocabulary or the structures necessary to successfully accomplish the assigned task. The following are two situations from a first-year French textbook. The first situation is appropriate for the Intermediate Level, the second for the Advanced Level.

You would like a friend to go to the movies with you.

1. Find out when he/she is free.
2. Invite him/her to go to a movie.
3. Discuss the kind of movie you would like to see.
4. Arrange a time and meeting place.
5. Decide whether you will do anything else that evening.
[Bragger and Rice, 2, p. 523.]

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You and a friend are staying in a small hotel in Paris. Around midnight your friend complains of being sick (cramps, chills, fever). You go to the desk in the lobby and ask for help.

1. Explain the problem to the desk clerk.
2. Ask if there is a drugstore in the neighborhood that stays open late at night.
3. Ask for directions on how to get there; repeat the directions to verify that you have heard them correctly.
4. Go to the drugstore and explain your friend's problem to the druggist.
5. Ask for some medicine.
6. Find out if there are special instructions as to how the medicine should be taken.

[Bragger and Rice, 2, p. 524.]

In creating these situations, care should be taken to control the vocabulary and structures in such a way that the student cannot simply translate from the English. It may also be preferable for the instructor to play the role of the target language official or professional if the situation calls for one. It is not likely that any of our students will ever be druggists or hotel clerks in the target culture.

Photographs and illustrations. Are photographs and illustrations in the textbook *only* included for artistic reasons, or are students asked to work with them, analyze them, or use them to further their cultural understanding? Too often, photographs are impossible to describe even in one's native language, particularly if they are limited to nature and architectural themes and do not include people engaged in specific and identifiable activities. A photo of the front portal of a French chateau will not lead to a great deal of discussion if the student is still limited to concrete terminology and has not yet learned to fantasize with the language in order to see beyond the portal. And, if the student says that the photo represents a *porte* (door), this will in any case not be accurate architecturally. It is important for teachers to analyze the photographs, to see how well they fit in with what is being learned in a particular chapter and how much their content offers possibilities for discussion and/or role-play.

One simple way to integrate photos into the class activities is to make slides of the best ones and to discuss these as a group. Another suggestion would be for the teacher to make up activities surrounding the photo content. Questions might include: "What do you think people are saying to each other in this photo?" "Act out the conversation that you think is taking place between the two friends in the café." "What do you see in this open-air market scene that you would not see in a market in the United States?" "Describe the clothing the people in the photo are wearing."

"What is unusual about their clothing?" Some questions require students to use imagination. If a photo represents business people in an office, they can be asked to talk about where each one got his or her education, where they grew up, what their family background is, how much money they make, whether or not they are married and have children, etc. It is clear that many types of activities can succeed only if students are willing to be inventive. The photo, of course, cannot really tell us the nature of the conversation between the shopper and the checker in a supermarket, but it will serve as a springboard for communication in a real setting.

Chapter or unit objectives. Do the various chapters or units of a textbook, either explicitly or implicitly, indicate the objectives in terms of function, context/content, and accuracy? Is it clear what tasks students should be able to carry out linguistically when they have finished a given segment? Or is there a vague promise of teaching the four skills, each of them developed without direction or specific objectives? If objectives do not exist, it behooves the teacher to establish them for each segment. Once these objectives have been established, it will be much easier to develop a functional syllabus, explicitly stating to students what tasks they will learn to accomplish.

Proficiency Guidelines and the Lesson Plan ——————

It is not enough to have a coherent proficiency-oriented curriculum. It is equally if not more important to follow through on the stated curricular objectives and to plan each class period carefully so that class content contributes to the overall furthering of proficiency goals. Each lesson plan should be a detailed version of the syllabus entry for the day, and each segment of the lesson plan should be included for very specific reasons that are meant to constitute one element in the picture as a whole.

This, in combination with the textbook materials, may mean a certain reordering of the sequence of presentation in the textbook itself. The larger questions that have to be asked first are: What do I want my students to be able to do well at the end of today's class? What do I want to have introduced to them? If there is an interweaving of learning activities (skill-getting) and acquisition activities (skill-using), students can perfect one task while entering into a new one. If we need objectives for curriculum and individual periods, we should also be clear about our objectives for each activity in which we choose to have students participate. What aspect of the larger context is enhanced by this vocabulary group? How does this structure help students to expand the context, and am I making them aware of this? Are students aware of the most frequent contexts in which this structure is likely to appear and have they had ample time to work in this context? If the instructor keeps in mind the larger picture and

objective and helps students make the association between seemingly (to the student) disconnected chunks of language, the successful development of proficiency is more likely to occur.

Is there a time during the class period when students can get information from the teacher about something they want to know how to say? Is there a good balance between structured and open-ended activities? When should correction occur systematically, and when should it be delayed? Have students had the chance to create with the language? Does this game have a real linguistic base or is it a game for its own sake? Are students integrating the various skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing)? Are the exercises contextualized and personalized? Is every activity totally predictable, or are there some that require students to be creative and to use circumlocution? Are there enough contexts so that a variety of language factors can be demonstrated?

These and other questions should be asked during the preparation of the lesson plan. Although the plan should always be flexible to accommodate spur-of-the-moment change, there should be enough structure to guide both instructor and students. Before-class preparation is therefore crucial to a well-organized and well-run class and is the means by which we can continue building toward proficiency. However, reevaluation of the plan after the class is finished may be equally important. Now that ideas have been put into practice, it is time to decide whether they indeed fulfilled expectations and accomplished what they were meant to accomplish. It is during this after-the-fact phase that we can make some modifications, noting what worked well and what did not. In short, what we end up with is an annotated lesson plan based on experience that will be all the more useful the next time the class is taught. Constant revision of the various elements and constant addition of new activities assure a pace and variety interesting not only to the students but also to the instructor.

Materials Appropriate for Various Proficiency Levels _____

When we say that we are teaching four-skills courses, what do we really mean and what do we do to develop these skills systematically? How do we integrate culture? What are our expectations in a French I, German I, or Spanish I course, and what materials are appropriate to maximize learning at that particular level?

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines themselves may be the best indicators of appropriate materials. For each skill, the statements of function, context/content, and accuracy help us to determine at what level students are operating, what grammar structures they should be working with, which contexts they are most comfortable with, and what tasks, if any, they need to be able to accomplish successfully. The descriptions also indicate which aspects of each of the skills contribute most to the

successful completion of the task at the various levels. For example, at a particular proficiency level, vocabulary may play the most important part in any communication that will take place. At another level, grammar (accuracy) begins to peak and correctness has precedence over other aspects. Fluency in speaking will enter at a higher level, and any sociolinguistic features demonstrating both understanding of cultural patterns and their assimilation will be more prominent at even higher levels. The inherent assumption is that a student's speaking, listening, reading or writing, and culture are being compared to those of the Educated Native Speaker, whose elements of language are all equally developed if not always equally used at any one time.

In the following pages, we will suggest materials associated with the various levels of proficiency, as well as some of their uses in the classroom. It is often difficult to distinguish between the materials and the techniques needed to use them effectively. The best materials will not help to develop proficiency if instructors do not treat them with proficiency in mind. They will simply become additional texts, realia, songs, etc. to be included in an already large collection of similar materials.

For the sake of continuity, we will present suggestions for materials development with abbreviated proficiency descriptions from Novice to Superior. Rather than assume that each level necessitates an entirely new set of materials and techniques, we should be aware of the basic principle put forth in the Oral Proficiency Interview, i.e., all materials, all contexts can be upgraded to fit the level at which we are working.

To illustrate this principle, let us look at a typical advertisement for a car. The ad probably shows a sleek machine, in an appealing color, with a large trunk in which a family is packing belongings in order to leave for vacation. To show the roominess of the trunk, each member of the family is putting a variety of things into the car. At the Novice Level, students simply enumerate what they see in the ad. As their skills improve, they will add verbs to explain what the family members are doing. Moving to an even higher level (Advanced or Superior), students can be asked to explain why they think each person has chosen to pack a particular object. They can conjecture on where the family is going according to the objects being packed. They can talk about the car and its features. Upgrading even further, students can discuss the role cars play in our society as status symbols, the problems they create (pollution, accidents, etc.); they can move to the rules of the road and compare European rules to those in America. Students can then talk about the car industry, the ups and downs of the American car companies, the competition from France, Germany, and particularly Japan. The possibilities are endless. This example illustrates that one simple picture from a magazine has many potential uses and cuts down on the work we have to do for the various classes we teach, from beginning to advanced. The same ad can then, of course, be utilized for skills other than speaking: students can write about any of the topics

they have discussed; they can listen to a taped conversation of two people debating what type of car to buy and the pros and cons of the new models; they can listen to a salesperson convincing someone to buy a particular car; they can participate in situations at the gas station, a car breakdown on the road, telephoning the garage, asking for specific services, and so forth.

One of the main principles of the Oral Proficiency Interview is that no one context is reserved for one proficiency level. Each context is upgraded and made more complicated and abstract as the interviewer encourages and judges the interviewee. It is evident that materials upgrading will also greatly simplify the task of instructors when they collect or create materials for the classroom.

As one may have assumed from the preceding pages, all the examples for materials and activities are given in English. The proficiency guidelines summarized here come from the generic descriptions and may therefore be applied to any language. (See Appendix A.)

Progression of functions from Novice to Superior levels. Novice-Level speakers have practically no functional ability, although they can communicate very simply with memorized material. At the Intermediate Level, they can get into, through, and out of simple survival situations; ask questions; answer questions; and create with the language. At the Advanced Level, they can get into, through, and out of survival situations with a complication; narrate and describe in present, past, and future time. At the Superior Level, they can handle unfamiliar topics or situatic hypothesize, and provide supported opinion.

Context/content from Novice to Superior levels. Novice-Level speakers are able to operate within limited concrete subject areas—basic objects, colors, clothing, family members, weather, weekdays, months, the day's date, and time. At the Intermediate Level, they can handle simple question-and-answer situations, familiar topics within the scope of very limited language experience, routine travel needs, minimum courtesy requirements, everyday survival topics. At the Advanced Level, they are able to discuss recreational activities and limited work requirements; they can deal with most social situations, including introductions; they can talk about concrete topics such as their own background, family, and interests, work, travel, and current events. At the Superior Level, they can state and defend opinions about current events and similar topics; they can participate in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics, on particular interests and special fields of interest.

Accuracy from Novice to Superior levels. At the Novice Level, accuracy is defined primarily as *intelligibility* because few if any grammar structures

exist in the speech to warrant discussion of the precision of the message conveyed. Speakers at the Intermediate Level can be expected to make many errors even in constructions which are quite simple and common, with frequent errors in pronunciation and grammar. They are intelligible to a native speaker accustomed to dealing with foreigners. At the Advanced Level, they are joining sentences in limited discourse; they have good control of morphology of the language (in inflected languages) and of the most frequently used syntactic structures; and they usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately. They do not yet have thorough or confident control of grammar, and some miscommunication still takes place. They are, however, understandable to native speakers *not* used to dealing with foreigners. At the Superior Level, there are only occasional errors in low-frequency structures, occasional errors in the most complex frequent structures, and sporadic errors in basic structures. Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. Control of grammar is good.

Materials for the Novice Level

What becomes very clear when one analyzes the speech of a Novice-Level speaker is that vocabulary is the essential feature that allows any form of communication whatsoever. In addition, pronunciation must be sufficiently accurate in that a few words and phrases at the speaker's disposal must be intelligible. One can easily imagine him or her using many gestures to accompany these words when trying to function in the target culture. Consequently, there is no functioning on the linguistic level, and language does not allow this speaker to accomplish any tasks.

What, then, would be the most appropriate materials to begin language study? First, the subject areas mentioned above are usually presented in the first few chapters of any textbook. Although limited communication depends mostly on the vocabulary, this is not to suggest that grammar is ignored at this level. For example, students are exposed to the present tense of regular verbs; they learn very common adjectives and adverbs, question verbs and negation; they are exposed to question forms (particularly yes/no questions), but when put into the situation of trying to have a conversation, these elements are still very unstable and may not surface with accuracy. These are students who may score 100 percent on a paper-and-pencil achievement test but whose language is limited to stock phrases and memorized sentences.

At first glance, it may seem that such limited language ability is not permit the use of particularly creative materials. However, at most concrete levels and because their memory can retain much more than isolated words, students can acquire even idiomatic expressions when these are treated as lexical items. For example, very early in every text-

book students are introduced to the polite form of a request "I would like." In this instance, all they need to add to this phrase are other words they have learned in order to communicate an idea. If we ask ourselves when we are most likely, in reality, to use the phrase "I would like," the situations we identify will suggest some of the materials we can create. In real discourse, the polite request is used in stores, cafés, and restaurants, when buying train tickets, when changing money, when introducing someone; and it can be used with a noun or an infinitive. The best sources for this basic survival language are the real objects associated with the situations described—packaging from products; labels from clothing; advertisements; foods; train, bus, and plane tickets; metro tickets, and catalogs from department stores. All of these realia supply a sufficiently wide vocabulary for students to be able to pick and choose and, although everyone in the class may be held responsible for a core vocabulary, individualization is possible through the definition of likes, dislikes, needs, hopes, and expectations.

Another source of information and materials is the imagination. What do we do first when we meet someone? What do we talk about in relatively superficial situations? The answers come readily to mind. First, we are likely to say "Hello" and introduce ourselves. We might make statements about the weather, particularly if it is exceptionally cold, hot, or beautiful. Then we are likely to move to autobiographical information, asking questions about the other person's life and supplying information about our own. As a general rule, it is always easier to arrive at communicative activities if we first take time to reflect on our experience and reality. Although this type of material will be presented at the very beginning of language learning, it is not going to become usable in a functional way until the Intermediate Level. Or to look at it from a different point of view, when these elements become stable, the student is likely to be near or in the Intermediate Level of proficiency.

The key for visuals at the Novice Level is that they must contain illustrations of as many objects (items) as possible. Since students have not yet reached the creative stage of language use, they rely very heavily on enumeration. The collage representing semantic fields (Maiguashca, 10) is particularly helpful. When dealing with family, foods, or any vocabulary group, the vocabulary can be taught in such a way that students realize from the outset that words have meaning only in relation to other words, that word families exist, that opposites help to define synonyms, and so forth. Students will learn very quickly that they should always look for alternative ways to say something, and as they progress in their language study, the habit of circumlocution will become more firmly established.

Although the ability to handle survival situations is characteristic of the Intermediate Level, the Novice speaker should be introduced to simulations as soon as enough simple connected language exists. For example, a situation card may look like this:

Play the role of waiter or student in the following situation. The student orders what he or she wishes to drink; the waiter brings the wrong beverage.

Modèle: Le Garçon: Vous désirez?
         L'Etudiante: Un thé au lait, s'il vous plaît.
         Le Garçon: Voilà, Madame ... un thé au citron.
         L'Etudiante: Non, Monsieur ... un thé au lait.
         Le Garçon: Ah, pardon, Madame, un thé au lait.
         L'Etudiante: Merci, Monsieur.
         Le Garçon: Je vous en prie, Madame.
[Bragger and Rice, 2, p. 6.]

(Waiter: What can I get you? Student: Tea with milk, please. .vaiter: Here it is, Madam ... a tea with lemon. Student: No, sir ... tea with milk. Waiter: Excuse me, Madam ... a tea with milk. Student: Thank you. Waiter: You're welcome.)

This particular situation is presented in the target language to accustom students to the idea of a simulation. It is also very structured so that they have the chance to practice a particular combination of words over and over. The only thing they need to supply is the drink they wish to order. Such a directed situation is very useful at the precreative stage of language use. Once the structures are in place, the situation will become more open-ended.

You and a friend meet at a café.

1. Say hello to each other.
2. Order something to drink.
3. When the waiter (waitress) brings the wrong drink, correct him or her.
4. Say "thank you" when the right drink is brought to you.
5. When the two of you have finished your drink, say "goodbye" to each other.

If the first few situations do not contain a model in the target language, they must be presented very simply, and the structures and lexical content must be controlled as much as possible.

Find a person in the class to whom you have not yet introduced yourself.

1. Say hello.
2. Introduce yourself.

3. Ask how he or she is.
4. Ask his or her age.

Now introduce your new friend to someone else in the class.

The card may also direct the student to get specific information from another student.

Talk to one of your classmates and get the following information:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Phone number
4. Age

Once this information has been obtained, students can either report back to the entire class or exchange the information with another couple.

Additional materials for the Novice-Level speaker continue to stress the acquisition of vocabulary and simple structures. Newspaper headlines related to the semantic fields already encountered can be created. Slides and transparencies (e.g., cartoon frames without bubbles) can illustrate a simple series of actions. Finally, much can be created by the students themselves. An ad or collage prepared by students for homework allows them to show in pictures the vocabulary they would like to learn, their preferences, their interests. Instructors can then use these visuals as the basis for a class lesson giving students the additional satisfaction of having their work recognized and integrated into the classroom procedures.

Autobiographical information is most frequently provided when one first meets someone. Also we are always being asked to fill out forms such as nametags, luggage tags, driver's license, application forms, computer dating forms, lost-and-found forms, bills, class schedules, employment forms, and so forth. Once the information has been filled in, students can then move from the initial first person speech to the third person by describing someone else in the class. They can determine what they have in common, using the first person plural ("We are all students; many of us are eighteen years old; we all study Spanish and Geography.")

Materials for the Intermediate Level

From a grammatical point of view, the Intermediate-Level speaker is able to use the present indicative of regular verbs, some high-frequency irregular verbs, and the immediate future. However, many errors should still be expected, particularly with irregular verbs. At this point, there is a clear concept of gender, number, and subject-verb agreement, although many

errors are likely to occur. Greater use is being made of modifiers, particularly articles and their contractions, possessive adjectives, and adverbs. Idiomatic expressions for weather, age, personal characteristics, and needs now exist in the active language. From the point of view of syntax, correct positioning of the most commonly used adjectives can now be expected.

When speaking of contexts at the Intermediate Level, we refer to survival situations typically encountered by the tourist in the foreign culture. These include getting food (restaurant, café, market); getting lodging (hotel, boardinghouse, youth hostel); traveling (various means of transportation, getting tickets, making reservations); telling time; making purchases; making simple transactions in the post office, bank, or pharmacy; greeting people and taking leave; speaking simply about future plans (immediate future); talking about family and friends; talking simply about self; and using numbers up to 1000 to be able to accomplish some of these tasks (dealing with money, for example).

These contexts clearly indicate that the scope of language now makes it possible to upgrade materials and to insist on accuracy in structures that before were unstable or nonexistent. In order to cope with survival situations, for example, students must be able to ask and answer questions. Most important, students are now creating with the language, a concept that merits some explanation because of its apparent vagueness. If the Novice speaker works primarily with memorized materials, this means that he or she repeats chunks of language without variation, using the interlocutor's questions as the springboard for the answers. The Intermediate speaker, on the other hand, although largely still working with memorized materials, is able to recombine them into personally meaningful messages. Language can be individualized as students become increasingly adaptable to a variety of contexts. They are capable of generalizing from the language they learned for one situation and applying it to another. Creating with the language, therefore, means increasing one's linguistic flexibility.

In analyzing the speech of Intermediate- to Superior-Level speakers, it is helpful to take into account the relative contribution model presented by Clifford and Higgs (7). According to the model, five linguistic factors contribute to speech: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and sociolinguistic factors. At the level of the Educated Native Speaker, these factors contribute 20 percent each to make up the total speech act. At lower levels, each of the factors has a different weight depending on the proficiency of the speaker. As has been pointed out, vocabulary is definitely the dominating feature in speech at the Novice Level. The Intermediate Level, as defined in the relative contribution model, still shows the clear dominance of vocabulary as the major contributing factor to communication. When broken down by percentages, vocabulary contributes 45 percent to speech, pronunciation 18 percent, grammar 25 percent, fluency 7 percent, and the sociolinguistic factor 5 percent. By sociolinguistic is meant

the ability to adjust language according to contexts in a culturally authentic way. It is understandable, therefore, that although the Intermediate speaker may know the difference between the informal *tu* and the formal *vous* in French, little else is present in speech to demonstrate cultural authenticity—hence, the almost insignificant contribution (5 percent) of the sociolinguistic factor at this level. Although the relative contribution model should not be taken as an absolute, it can help us to determine the most appropriate materials for each proficiency level and to become aware of what we can expect from the speakers at each level.

The most important consideration in choosing materials for the Intermediate Level is that they provide students with ample opportunity to create with the language. To do this, students must be accorded time, they must be allowed to work without constant supervision of the teacher, and they must be put into situations that are neither too structured nor too open-ended. At this level, students still need guidance, and the situation card is an ideal way to provide both guidance and freedom in expression. If appropriate situations are not already present in the textbook, they can easily be created for each chapter, with the context changing according to the chapter topics. For example, a situation card pertaining to a chapter on clothing might read:

> Go to the department store, choose an outfit for a particular occasion, and discuss size, color, and price with the salesperson. Your outfit should include shoes.

Upgrading the situation to include a complication, the same context can be presented in the following way:

> You're in the clothing department of a store to buy a blue sports jacket. There is only one jacket left in your size, but when you reach for it, you find out that another person also wants it. Both of you give the salesperson reasons why he or she should sell the jacket to you. [Bragger and Rice, 2, p. 311.]

It is clear that students cannot simply translate these situations but rather must communicate the ideas presented in them as best as they can within the scope of their language ability. Each student will probably have a different way of approaching the problem and this is where true creativity comes into play.

Numerous classroom activities have been created and published over the last few years, such that the work of instructors need not be particularly overwhelming. In addition to activities presented in textbooks, ancillary materials such as teacher's editions, instructor's manuals, tapes, etc. add to the wealth of materials. Meaningful communication is at the heart of many activities texts [see Moskowitz (11), Stevick (19), Schulz (16),

Westphal (20), Savignon and Berns (15), Smith (17), Guntermann and Phillips (4), Sadow (14), and Macdonald and Rogers-Gordon (9)]. Another useful source of information for the foreign language instructor is the many ESL texts that have appeared on the market. Because they tend to be organized along the functional-notional lines, they provide activities that can be incorporated easily into the foreign language classroom. One such example is the series *Lifelines 1, 2, 3, 4: Coping Skills in English* by Foley and Pomann (3), where students progress systematically from "Hello and Goodbye" (Chapter 1, *Lifelines 1*) to "Personal Information: Giving information about yourself during a job interview; Writing a résumé" (Chapter 14, *Lifelines 4*).

At the Intermediate Level, small-group work can begin and is very successful in fostering communication. Planning a trip, a party, the building of a house, etc. can be done in groups of four or five, with the results reported back to the entire class. Although the teacher is not with any of the groups unless questions are raised, the process of reporting back allows ample time for correction to take place after the report has been made. If lexical, grammatical, and structural lessons flow naturally from the statements made by students, this supports Rivers' contention that skill-getting and skill-using should flow naturally one from the other without stated lines of demarcation (12, 13). In every activity, students should be held accountable for what they have done or said, so that the end result of accurate communication can be achieved. As the flow of communication becomes easier, the correctness of speech must be increased progressively.

Materials for the Advanced Level

An Advanced-Level speaker should be considered as someone who speaks the language quite well, someone who could live on the economy in the target culture and work in a fairly routine job that does not demand a great deal of improvisation or present unknown situations. A percentage breakdown of the relative contribution chart indicates that pronunciation contributes 10 percent to effective communication, vocabulary 39 percent, grammar 38 percent, fluency 8 percent, and the sociolinguistic factor 5 percent. The most significant shift we note here is that the contribution of grammar, i.e., accuracy, has increased dramatically since the Intermediate Level. This, in turn, supports Higgs' (6, p. 7) contention that in order to arrive at this level, systematic error correction must occur from the very beginning of language study, and that if students are to rise to the Advanced Level, accuracy must have a prominent place in their language learning. In terms of accuracy, the Advanced-Level speaker can now be understood by a native speaker of the language who is *not* accustomed to dealing with foreigners. Fluency and the sociolinguistic factors have re-

mained stable since the Intermediate Level, showing no marked increase in contribution to speech. This is to be expected since these are the elements that usually keep a person from sounding like a native speaker even though communication is already effectively managed.

The most important factor in the proficiency description is that the Advanced-Level speaker is able to *narrate and describe in present, past, and future time.* This indicates that, unlike the Intermediate speaker who still essentially communicates in sentences, the Advanced speaker is able to speak in paragraphs and convey the notion of time fairly accurately. The word *time* is used in this descriptor because, at this level, it is acceptable for someone to convey the future by using such expressions as "I plan to . . . ," "I expect to . . . ," "I hope to . . . ," "I'm going to . . . ," wherever such expressions are possible in a given language. In French, for example, the use of the true future tense is not required until the Superior-Level, in part because it has been noted that this is not a high-frequency tense in the daily spoken language. If the French themselves favor the immediate future in conversation, then it would seem unreasonable for us to expect our students to acquire habits that the French tend to avoid. There should never be a question of making students more French than the French, more Spanish than the Spanish, or more German than the Germans. To return to our example of the future tense, the Educated Native Speaker of French is, of course, able to use it if he or she chooses to do so. Consequently, as learners of French move into the Superior Level and, therefore, closer to the Educated Native Speaker, they must also acquire the ability to use the future tense.

For purposes of materials development, the notions of description and narration are crucial to a change in focus. Grammatically, this implies that students are now able to use connectors such as relative pronouns fairly accurately, that they have added many function words to their language, that their use of modifiers has increased, and that they can begin, continue, and end a story. Control of elements such as possessive and demonstrative adjectives, which are unstable at the lower levels, is now expected most of the time. Object pronouns should be used correctly and with regularity to keep narration and description from becoming repetitive. Prepositions should be in place, and the notion of negation should have been developed to include the concepts of *never, no one, no longer,* and so forth.

All of the above suggest that we must now concentrate on giving these students ample opportunity for narration and description. It further indicates that extensive work needs to be done with the concepts of past, present, and future time. Most important, it suggests that instructors must allow students to speak without interruption of the language they are trying to create and the story they are trying to tell. Constant interruption under these circumstances will lead to disjointed discourse, discrete sentences, and little sense of continuity. Yet correction must still be a part of

the learning process, so activities must still be guided, and systematic follow-up for correction must have its place.

The materials suggested earlier—e.g., ads, pictures, cartoons, slides, newspapers, and magazines—will now be used somewhat differently since students are asked to engage in lengthier discourse. One may ask them to describe something in detail or to create a story with invented or imagined details. Autobiographical elements used earlier in mostly question/answer form should be expanded and elaborated. It is now possible to add current events, with students recounting the details of a story they heard on the radio or read in a newspaper. Those who are not familiar with the current political scene (as many students are not), can concentrate on what is happening on campus, student elections, controversial issues, or the student newspaper. What is important here is not that the course suddenly be transformed into a political science course, but that students acquire the skills to function in a variety of contexts requiring the ability to inform someone about something. The following are specific techniques allowing them to do so.

Reporting back what has been heard or read. First, students need to be taught the linguistic elements commonly needed to report back effectively. This can be accomplished initially through short utterances: " 'Mary, what did you do yesterday?' 'I stayed at home and did my homework. I also helped my parents in the garden.' " " 'Paul, tell us what Mary did yesterday.' 'Mary said that she stayed at home and did her homework. She also helped her parents in the garden.' " In other words, students need to become adept at using introductory statements such as "she said," "she explained," and so forth. From there, they can be asked to gather information from other students and to combine this information into a short paragraph for reporting to the rest of the class. In some instances, they can be the observers in a group, or the recording secretary, who is responsible for summarizing what has been said. Also, students must be able to bring their narration or description to a smooth closure and not simply stop speaking at the end of the last sentence. In addition, the ability to state opinion becomes increasingly important since students need to learn how to comment on what was said using appropriate opinion statements.

Selling something to someone. Students try to convince someone of the superior quality of the product they are trying to sell. This includes the ability to make comparisons and use the superlative and many descriptive adjectives. Advertisements for this activity may be chosen either by the instructor or the student.

Teaching the teacher. You, the instructor, must choose a subject area with which you are not very familiar but that you know is well known by students, for example, rock music or a particular singer, sports, dances,

movies, etc. In small groups or as a class, students prepare to teach you as much as possible about their subject. They will usually prepare this ahead of time so that they can support what they are saying with examples (taped songs, visuals, demonstrations). The advantage of choosing topics truly unfamiliar to the teacher is that students know they are not simply repeating things already well known to the teacher. In this instance they are the experts.

Short lectures. Pick a subject that is not commonly an area of expertise for most teenagers (e.g., classical music). Present a concise, five-minute speech about the topic and then have students summarize what they have learned. As students become accustomed to this procedure, it is important that you include opinion statements so that they learn to reflect your feelings about the particular topic. Note-taking may or may not be allowed.

Semantic fields. Word association that leads to short sentences at the Novice and Intermediate levels leads to more extensive narration at the Advanced Level. In fact, brainstorming a word results in the creation of stories, factual or invented. For example, the word *green* may first recall a single word. Then students have to explain why they made the particular association, telling the story that is connected with it. Words such as *money, work, vacation,* or *parents* are particularly useful, in that they elicit not only facts but also many personal feelings.

Comparing with autobiographical information. Students compare their upbringing and childhood to that of their parents or grandparents. They then explain what they intend to do once they have children of their own. This allows them to highlight the problems parents have in raising children today, the problems that are likely to exist in the future, and the ones they would probably not have had twenty or thirty years ago. At the same time, students are revealing a great deal about themselves as individuals.

Situation cards with a complication. The situation cards used at the Intermediate Level were planned to give students the ability to get into, through, and out of a routine, expected situation. At the Advanced Level, students must now cope with a problem that presents itself unexpectedly. To judge how effectively communication takes place, it is useful to give the situation card to only one student, while his or her partner is left in the dark about what is going to happen. The partner's understanding of the situation helps to determine how well the task was handled. It also obliges the second student to react spontaneously to the situation. Another interesting variation consists of giving each student a card, but neither knows what is on the other's card. Neither person knows therefore how the other will react, thus making improvisation an imperative.

Summarizing an article or piece of writing. Each student reads a short article as homework. In class he or she is given two minutes to recount the essence of the article. If the same work has been read by the entire class, the rest of the students are then invited to comment on the summary, add to it, disagree on the interpretation of the message, or agree with the points that have been made. If different articles are read by each student, the rest of the class may ask questions for clarification or additional information.

Debate. Students are divided into groups of five, with two arguing for and two arguing against the topic question, and one serving as the moderator. Topics should be sufficiently controversial to ensure a lively debate (e.g., the drinking age, capital punishment, etc.). Each member of the team chooses a particular aspect of the topic and is allowed two or three minutes to present the point of view. The result will be a short paragraph. When all the members of the debate team have made their statements, they are invited to challenge statements made by the opposing faction. Finally, the rest of the class asks the panel questions for clarification or commentary. A vote can then be taken to determine which side presented its arguments more effectively. The moderator is the timekeeper and directs follow-up discussion.

Description of activities. Since it is assumed that the Advanced-Level speaker can describe his or her activities on a typical or particular day, this should be a regular part of class activities. Expectations would include correct use of the reflexive in the languages that necessitate it and accuracy in present as well as past and future tenses. Since daily activities often do not vary greatly among students in the same age group, the question of how these activities vary on holidays, vacations, and weekends can add the variety needed to keep the descriptions interesting. To reduce the amount of time devoted to this activity, students can be instructed to get the information from their neighbor during the minutes *before* class begins. The instructor can then arbitrarily choose one of them to give the information thus obtained to the rest of the class. This procedure has the additional advantage of getting students accustomed to using the target language outside of class and to help them realize that it is not only used during the precise time of the class period. They should already be busy communicating with each other when the teacher enters the class. Periodically, during the semester or year, the information they are to get can be changed.

Film. At the Advanced Level, students should be able to retell stories they have seen or heard. If films are not readily available to instructors, storytelling can be based on movies students have seen. If a target-language film is being shown on campus or in town, students can be required to see it so that everyone will have a common basis for discussion.

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Current events. At regularly paced intervals, students are asked to talk about an article they have read in the newspaper or a story they have heard on the radio or seen on television. In addition to reinforcing speaking skills, this activity helps students to inculcate the habit of informing themselves about what is happening in the world. Because foreign language newspapers or news broadcasts are not always available, it is also valuable for students to acquire the habit of reading the newspapers their parents read or make a habit of listening to radio or television news. The important result is that they will acquire the ability to recount in the target language what they have read, heard, or seen. If one of these news stories happens to concern the target culture, so much the better.

Integration with other subjects studied in school. Description and narration can be based on a book students have read in English class, a composition they have heard in music class, a painting they have studied in art history, or a problem they discussed in social studies. The added advantage to this type of integration with the target language is that students will begin to appreciate the interrelationships of subjects and will understand them not as isolated courses of study but rather as integral parts of the human experience.

Materials for the Superior Level

The percentage breakdown represented in the relative contribution model indicates that pronunciation at the Superior Level now contributes 5 percent to total speech production, vocabulary 27 percent, grammar 45 percent, fluency 15 percent, and the sociolinguistic factor 8 percent. The emphasis has now decidedly moved to grammatical accuracy, and this is the factor that distinguishes the speech of a Superior-Level speaker.

What should students be prepared for in order to successfully complete the tasks characteristic of this level? First, the Superior rating represents *professional competency* in the language. The individual no longer simply lives on the economy, but is able to be an independent individual within the target culture. Although he or she will still be recognized as a foreigner, most tasks likely to be required can be accomplished with relative ease. The speaker should be able to improvise in unfamiliar situations, use circumlocution to disguise some of the lacunae still existing in the language, hypothesize using conditional sentences, support opinion, state the pros and cons, present differing points of view, and react correctly to the nuances of almost any discussion. A Superior-Level speaker is a full conversational partner who contributes completely to the discussion, at least linguistically. Since, at this point, students are at the most mature stages of their formal language learning, the range and use of materials are virtually limitless. Students must be given the opportunity to converse as

much as possible, with refinements and corrections made less frequently than was done earlier.

Situations. These are now designed to be unfamiliar, with some vocabulary items that students have probably not encountered before. The instructor should, however, be fairly certain that circumlocution is within their capability so that linguistic breakdown does not occur. Students should understand that they may not know every word in the situation but that they should do the best they can to communicate the message, working around the word and finding ways to replace it. If they have been trained from the very first course to say things in different ways, they will not have a great deal of difficulty grasping this concept and they should get along quite well.

> During a severe thunderstorm you discover that the water is pouring into your basement and that your floor drains are plugged up. When you try to call the plumber, you find out that your phone is out. Go to your neighbor, explain the situation, ask to borrow some brooms and buckets, and ask if you can use the phone to call the plumber. Ask your neighbor if he or she could come and help you sweep the water out of the basement.

This situation is one that students are not likely to have experienced, and it contains vocabulary that is not usually taught. In short, it requires them to do the best they can to get the help they need.

Because the number of contexts has been increased to include work-related and career-oriented considerations at the Superior Level, it is important to create materials and strategies that allow students to enter into the type of language that reflects their professional interests. This may include business terminology, social work, literature, teaching, technical translation, and so forth. Since most students do not yet find themselves in a real professional situation but rather in courses preparing them for the future, discussion of more technical aspects of other courses is one way to approach these topics. It is not really a question of becoming too technical but of being able to discuss basic concepts in lay terms. One does not have to be a doctor to talk about what doctors do, nor does one have to be a lawyer to describe the most common professional concerns of the lawyer. Perhaps more detail can be demanded when students are addressing the profession of their choice, particularly since other course work has probably given them a special expertise in their chosen field.

Hypothesizing and supporting opinion are the main distinguishing features of the Superior Level. However, before conversation flows freely, much practice is needed to solidify conditional tenses and sentences. This may be done with exercises of sentence completion, where either the first element or the resulting clause is given. To develop accurate habits at this

stage, the repetition of the clause in conjunction with the response is important.

Examples: If I could relive my life ...
          If I could spend an afternoon with the president
          of the U.S. ...
          If I had children ...
          ... I would have gone to another university.
          ... I would go to China.
          ... I would not lend her the money.

Problem solving. A series of problems is presented and students have to give advice to another person or group ("If I were you, I would ..."). The person or group receiving the advice may ask for clarification ("When would you ..., why would you ..., where would you ..."). If the problems are designed well, they will represent some concerns and situations in which students may one day find themselves or have already experienced. Topics of particular interest are: getting a job, not getting a job, responses to hypothetical interview questions, unemployment, to have or not to have a family, how children should be raised, what you would do if you found out that your company requires you to travel extensively and therefore leave your family, etc.

Radio and TV broadcasts. Students may prepare presentations, including weather, sports, and so forth. A more challenging experience consists of turning on the television set in the classroom, turning off the sound, and having students invent the dialogue or act as the announcers as the program progresses. Programs that are particularly useful for this type of activity are soap operas, cartoons, and sports events.

Conversational fillers. One important aspect of real conversation is knowing *how* to hesitate, to disguise the searching for a word or structure. In part, this is accomplished with conversational fillers or hesitation words. Every teacher knows how difficult it is to introduce these into student speech so that they will emerge correctly and at the appropriate times. To begin with, the fillers must be part of a relatively structured situation. For example, a small group is given a particular topic to discuss. At the same time, each student in the group is given a card with a number of fillers and is instructed to use each one at least once during the course of the discussion. The same can be done with idiomatic expressions used to state opinion or with any other recurring expression that is not context-specific.

Taped conversations used as a basis for the class lesson. A group of students is asked to tape ten minutes of a discussion on a given topic or a topic of their choice. The tape is then used on the same or subsequent day

as the basis for the lesson. The conversation is analyzed grammatically, lexically, and from a cultural point of view. The instructor and students make suggestions and corrections, find different ways of expressing the same idea, work with vocabulary groups, analyze the preciseness with which ideas were expressed. This activity will be upgraded or downgraded automatically because students will always express themselves at the level that is most natural to them. It can thus be used at almost any level, even when the expression of ideas is still very basic. Students enjoy this activity because they know their contribution determines the lesson; they hear their own voices, they are praised for what they do well, and they learn what they can improve.

Interpretation, analysis, and criticism. One important characteristic of Superior-Level speakers is that they deal more comfortably with abstract concepts, allowing them to discuss controversial subjects, philosophical or moral problems, and the intangibles of feeling. At this point, for example, the teacher can play a classical composition and ask students to describe the feelings the music evokes in them. Examples of related activities are the discussion of various levels of meaning in a literary text such as a poem; the interpretation and criticism of a speech delivered by a political candidate or figure; the discussion of stereotypes, cultural differences, and similarities; and the expression of reactions to stressful or happy situations. Since very few contexts are off limits at the Superior Level, it is generally easier to promote discussion providing, of course, that the contexts are somehow of interest to students.

Homework Assignments and the Development of Oral Proficiency

Perhaps the most difficult task facing a teacher is how to have students continue conversational practice outside of class. The following suggestions require little or no teacher preparation and they enable students to practice what has been learned in class. Too often, speaking the target language occurs only during the three to five weekly hours of class. With twenty to thirty students in the average class, it is clear that each student will have relatively little time to work on this skill.

Conversational partners. At the beginning of the year or semester, students who live near each other are paired up as conversational partners. They are instructed to spend two half-hour periods per week in conversation with each other. Until they become comfortable with this practice, they may be given specific subjects of discussion. They are then asked to report back to the teacher and/or the class, to explain any conclusions they have reached and why, to explain when and why they had problems expressing

a particular idea. A different and perhaps more efficient check is to have them tape their conversations to be turned in. Suggestions and corrections are then recorded directly onto the tape by the teacher. It is important to note not only the negative features but also the strengths in order to make the conversational partnership a positive experience. The two students then listen to the instructor's comments together and consciously work on incorporating corrections and suggestions into the next conversation.

Taped homework. Among the many assignments that can be done on cassette are the following: interview someone, answer a series of questions, present a point of view on a problem, tape a skit with other students, read a text, give a short lecture. For regular, direct communication with the teacher, students can be asked to keep a taped journal, an audio cassette on which they record anything that comes to mind, such as a problem, a request for information, a request for an opinion or any other message they wish to transmit to the teacher. The instructor then answers directly on the cassette. This is a variation on the dialogue journal (18), and is a more personal, individual means of communication.

This type of homework is particularly important in a conversation course, where too frequently homework consists exclusively of reading or writing, skills that contribute only indirectly to the development of oral proficiency. The more often students are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation, the more feedback they receive on their way of expressing ideas, the more likely it is that their language skills will improve.

Summary

In this chapter we have attempted to describe some of the many activities and possible materials that may be used to develop oral proficiency. Most of these activities involve the other skills—reading, listening, speaking, culture—although in these instances they serve primarily as supporting skills for oral communication. This emphasis on the oral skill does not suggest, however, that speaking is or should be considered more important than writing or the receptive skills. In terms of proficiency, it is simply the one that has been worked with first, the one that has a proficiency evaluation firmly in place, the one that has been developed with greater difficulty in past years. With the introduction of the Oral Proficiency Interview into academia has come the realization that perhaps too little attention has been paid to the development of oral proficiency in the past, that too little has been known about its place in the classroom, that it has been simpler to talk about than to put appropriate techniques into action. Rather than overshadowing the development of proficiency in the other skills, speaking is now on a more equal footing in pedagogical considerations and practice.

The basic principles proposed for speaking activities and materials may also be followed for the other skills. The ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines are again the best descriptors of what may be expected at the various levels and the contexts that are appropriate. Whenever possible, it is advisable to devote some time in each class period to the specific skills, upgrading materials as necessary, moving from the factual and concrete to the abstract, from words to sentences to paragraphs, from survival situations to the unfamiliar. Materials should be designed to challenge students to progress beyond themselves, to help them realize their potential, to give them the opportunity to work with and acquire the authentic language as it is spoken and written in the target culture.

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Washington, DC and Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
(December 1986)

Arabic Proficiency Guidelines

In this article, Allen describes and discusses the problem of diglossia in the establishment of guidelines for Arabic. While recognizing the difficulty in excluding other forms of Arabic, Allen promotes the idea of establishing guidelines for Modern Standard Arabic. The latter part of the article contains the actual proposed guidelines for Arabic.

Roger Allen, professor of Arabic at the University of Pennsylvania and one of the leaders of the proficiency movement, is an ACTFL-certified trainer in Arabic.

ARABIC PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES

ROGER ALLEN .
University of Pennsylvania

In Al-^{c}Arabiyya 17 we published a short article describing the process of preparing a set of proficiency guidelines for Modern Standard ·Arabic, along with a series of "premises" under which the work would proceed.

The guidelines have now been prepared in preliminary and provisional form and are included as the second part of this article. My colleagues, Drs. Adel Allouche and Mohammed Jiyad (assisted by David Pinault, Dwight Reynolds, Reem Safadi, and Mary Tahan), and I are now working with the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) on the process of revising and refining these guidelines before they are to take their place in published form alongside those already issued (French, Spanish, German, to be soon followed by Russian, Japanese, and Chinese). This article constitutes an invitation to members of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic to participate in the process through comments and criticisms.

I have prefaced the text of the guidelines with an introductory section in which I have tried to outline some of the issues and problems which have to be faced in preparing such descriptions. While the Introduction reflects the views of the Working Group in Arabic at the University of Pennsylvania, it also represents the results of a number of extremely useful discussions on the subject with teachers of Arabic, linguists, and educational theorists.

Please send your comments to:

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Introduction

It is not our wish or intention to downplay the significance of the large number of problems which face any group which would endeavor to produce proficiency guidelines for Arabic. On the other hand, we firmly believe that the days when scholars who use Arabic in their scholarship and teaching can proclaim that Arabic is e'ther "difficult" or "different" should be at an end. It is our hope to place Arabic within the fold of other foreign languages as they are taught in the Western world, rather than to keep it outside that milieu, like some exotic plant. Let us therefore address some of the issues head-on in the hope of finding, if not solutions to the problems, then at least compromises which may be generally acceptable.

The issue of diglossia in Arabic has been widely explored by linguists, and there seems little point in elaborating here. What concerns us more are the implications of that situation for learners and teachers of the language.

The language used for oral communication between Arabs will be one of a number of colloquial dialects. Geographically contiguous dialects (such as, say, those of Lebanon and Cairo) have almost complete inter-comprehensibility, aided to a large degree by the modern communications media. On the other hand, dialects separated by wide distances (e.g., Moroccan and Iraqi) have less inter-comprehensibility. Thus, in certain situations (such as international conferences within the Arab world, including the Arab League) a form of the standard written language is used for oral communication. Such is also the case with news broadcasts, the United Nations (where standard Arabic is one of the official languages), and some theatrical productions and university lectures. It will be observed, however, that none of these represent

the day-to-day proficiency skills as envisaged by the ACTFL guidelines.
We thus have a language, called Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) in
English and often al-lugha al-^{c}aribiyya al-mu^{c}asira or even al-lugha
al-fusha al-mu^{c}asira in Arabic, which is spoken in certain circum-
stances of a very restricted nature.

The standard language of written communication in Arabic is
MSA just mentioned. It is used throughout the Arab world and is the
modern manifestation of al-lugha al-fusha, the so-called "classical
Arabic" which finds its most revered manifestations in the Qur'an and
also in the masterpieces of Islamic thought and Arabic literature.
The very term "al-fusha" is a superlative adjective meaning "most
eloquent" or "most correct usage," and this reflects a widely held
opinion among speakers of Arabic that the written language is somehow
a "better" language than the colloquial, the ^{c}ammiyya which means
(literally) "plebeian." Such attitudes and opinions need not, of
course, affect the decisions which we are to reach regarding the
composition of Arabic guidelines, but they are cited purely to give an
illustration of the way in which many Arabic speakers regard the
division within their language.

The problems raised by this situation have already been
addressed by some organizations which teach Arabic. We would cite as
an example the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) in Washington, D.C.
which, in the light of the above situation, decided to teach a kind of
"middle language" which is a blend of the spoken standard language
with a number of lexical items culled from the colloquial dialect of
the region of Jordan-Israel-Syria-Lebanon; there are obviously differ-
ences within the dialect region, but it is often referred to in
textbooks as Levantine Arabic. Graduates of the program are able to
communicate orally with a large number of speakers of Arabic from
within this particular dialect area and from others as well. However,
the language which they acquire is not the spoken language of any
dialect area and thus, while graduates are indeed able to communicate
effectively and to carry out the tasks for which they are trained,
genuine proficiency (interpreted literally as replicating the native-
speaking environment) is not attained. We should make it clear that

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the FSI program has been discussed above not in order to criticize either its program or the results which are achieved; far from it. The goals set by the program represent one of the few attempts in the teaching of Arabic thus far to produce students with any kind of real proficiency in the language. The compromises which they have reached may not produce genuine proficiency in the narrow sense, but constitute precisely the kind of decision-making process which is needed in order to compose ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

Without adaptations and adjustments, then, the proficiency guidelines for Arabic will not be able to replicate those of the other languages for which guidelines have been written so far. To a certain extent compromises will have to be made which acknowledge the language situation(s) described above. There may also need to be some accommodation between theoretical demands of proficiency and pedagogical feasibility. There seems after all to be little purpose in producing a set of theoretically immaculate guidelines which cannot be implemented.

Discussion

One possible solution to the dilemma which presents itself is the alternative of writing guidelines for speaking and listening which use descriptions culled from the colloquial dialects and of writing guidelines for reading and writing based on the standard written language. There are two immediately apparent problems associated with this suggestion:

(1) The first is connected with the question of which dialect(s) to choose (unless, that is, we are to decide to write them for virtually all the major dialects). This is not merely a linguistic decision, as it were, but one where not a little politics and economics is involved. During the heyday of Nasserite sentiment in the Arab world, Egyptian dialect (meaning that of Cairo) enjoyed much popularity throughout the Arab world (aided and abetted by film and television production, a factor which still persists). This was further emphasized in the teaching of Arabic in this

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country by the fact that our major and best program of study
abroad, the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad (CASA), was based in
Cairo and that our students learned colloquial Cairene as part of
the program.

Today, on the other hand, the position of Cairene/Egyptian col-
loquial as the primary dialect seems much more equivocal, although
it is freely admitted that Egyptians do not believe that!
Economic factors might suggest that a dialect of the Gulf or that
of Iraq would be more "practical" for many students of Arabic.
However, the CASA program continues to exist and indeed to thrive.
It still requires that students study the colloquial of Cairo as
part of the program, and rightly so. Is there, then, a case for
writing the oral-skill descriptions for this colloquial (and per-
haps two or three others)?

(2) The second issue is a purely practical one unconnected
with the theoretical implications of proficiency. It concerns the
feasibility of offering courses of study in Arabic at Western
institutions which will allow for such a combination of the
standard written language with a colloquial dialect. There are at
the moment very few institutions which offer courses in colloquial
dialects and, to my knowledge, none which would take a student
through to the advanced levels on the ACTFL scale. This also
seems to imply that we would have to rely on the CASA program to
attain those levels, a decision which would (a) restrict us to
Cairene colloquial as our choice of oral medium and (b) restrict
those students attaining advanced levels of proficiency to those
who can attend the CASA program.

The second of these issues is admittedly a largely practical
matter, the resolution of which should probably follow rather than pre-
cede the preparation of proficiency guidelines. However, like the
first category, it does illustrate some of the issues associated with
the adoption of any colloquial dialect(s) as the medium of oral expres-
sion within the guidelines.

A second possibility (and the one which we have actually pursued
thus far in our preliminary version of the guidelines) is to write a set

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of guidelines for the standard written language (MSA). This, there-
fore, includes the speaking and listening skills, even though, in speak-
ing at least, the situation is not a real one: native speakers of Ara-
bic do not discuss the weather with each other in MSA! Our aim thus
far has been basically to get something down in writing to which
people can react and (one hopes) respond. Let it, therefore, be
clearly and freely admitted that the descriptions of the speaking
skill, in particular at the higher levels of Advanced and Superior, do
not replicate native-speaking situations (except in specific circum-
stances such as pan-Arab conferences and meetings). However, while it
is not the medium of oral communication between any two speakers of a
dialect area, it is potentially a means of communication at the
disposal of any educated Arab when required. Two issues which
immediately emerge are that:

(1) This is thus not a "natural" situation even for a highly
educated native speaker unless he is, say, a teacher at Al-Azhar
University in Cairo or a Taha Husayn who may (or in Taha Husayn's
case, did) habitually converse in standard Arabic;

(2) Noneducated native speakers of Arabic (of whatever cate-
gory) are thus excluded. As a footnote, one might add that this
does replicate the real situation to a degree in that in many vil-
lages someone will often have to interpret the television news or
even the newspaper for those who have not studied the standard writ-
ten language. This, however, does not make the situation any more
desirable.

There are, of course, practical conveniences to being able to write
the proficiency guidelines for a single language, not the least of
which is that it keeps Arabic in some sort of conformity with the
other languages for which guidelines have been produced. We might
also suggest that much theoretical evidence, corroborated by institu-
tions such as the Arabic School at Middlebury College and the Arabic
program at the University of Pennsylvania, suggests that teaching all
four skills on the basis of a single language--Modern Standard Written
Arabic--is a tremendous aid in the internalization of the structure
and principles of the language system, as the different skills

reinforce each other. Here, however, we are talking about pedagogy and not about proficiency.

These two sections illustrate different approaches to the problems which have been outlined. There will no doubt be others. The working group at the University of Pennsylvania would be eager to hear from members of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic concerning their views on this important subject. Meanwhile, we would like to suggest at least one compromise solution, if only to "set the ball rolling" on any one of a series of such possible solutions to our dilemma.

If we acknowledge that the result which is most desirable in acquiring Arabic in the Western world is proficiency in both the standard written language and a colloquial dialect, then one possible solution might·be to require that all students who wish to be certified at the Advanced or Superior levels in Arabic should also be proficient (at some level to be described and defined) in a colloquial dialect. This, too, is a compromise, of course. It does, however, have the virtue of acknowledging the desirability of using a colloquial dialect in oral communication at the higher levels of proficiency while preserving the pedagogical qualities of describing a single language.

The Guidelines

Note: The following guidelines for Arabic are both provisional and preliminary. At this stage they have no official status of any kind: they are being made available on a limited basis only and solely for the purpose of comment. They have been prepared at the request and with the approval of ACTFL (the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) and are intended to serve the purpose for Arabic that other guidelines have already served for French, German, and Spanish, and--soon--for Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. All these language-specific guidelines endeavor to conform (insofar as possible) with the GENERIC GUIDELINES which were prepared with the

purpose of serving for all languages. The guidelines for Arabic below should be considered therefore within these terms of reference.

The journal of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA), Al-ᶜArabiyya 17 (1984), contains a short statement concerning the parameters within which these Arabic guidelines have been prepared; interested readers are referred to that statement. Above all, it should be emphasized that the use of Modern Standard Arabic as the language medium for all the skill descriptions is essentially a matter of convenience and that others may wish to adapt the guidelines for use within programs of study in which the colloquial dialects are also included.

Guidelines for Speaking

Novice Low

Unable to function in spoken Modern Standard Arabic. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words such as مرحبا or اكرا. Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice Mid

Able to operate in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary and basic courtesy formulae. Some examples are: ان شاء الله ، الحمد لله ، كيف حالك؟ . Can answer with proper responses to a limited number of two-part courtesy formulae: شكرا - عفوا، صباح الخير - صباح النور , but purely from memorized repertoire. Syntax is fragmented. Virtually no conjugations of the verb are used. The majority of utterances consist of isolated words or short formulae of not more than two or three words and are marked by long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words. Pronunciation of Arabic sounds not present in English (such as ح ، ع ، خ , rolled ر , and emphatics) is barely intelligible; rarely distinguishes i ʿ from short vowels. Pronunciation strongly conditioned by first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as

teachers who are used to speaking with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterance.

Novice High

Able to satisfy immediate needs using learned utterances or formulae. There is no consistent ability to create original sentences or cope with simple survival situations, although there are some emerging signs of spontaneity and flexibility. Can ask a few questions and make statements with reasonable accuracy when this involves short memorized utterances or formuale. There is some increase in utterance length, but frequent long pauses and repetition of the interlocutor's words still occur. Most utterances are telegraphic and errors are constant and numerous in verb forms and in noun-adjective agreement. Little or no correct use of idāa construct is evident. Speech is marked by enumeration rather than sentences. Vocabulary is limited to common areas such as basic objects, some common verbs, and adjectives. Verb usage is limited to common forms such as first and third persons; identification and use of more complex forms such as the dual, feminine plural second and third persons is very weak. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, may severely inhibit communication even with persons used to dealing with such learners. Unable to make needs known and communicate essential information in a simple survival situation.

Intermediate Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and sometimes respond to simple statements, and maintain simple face-to-face conversation. Can also use limited constructions such as idāfa, verb-object phrases, and common adverbials such as كثيرا، قديما، and اخيرا . Most utterances contain fractured syntax and other grammatical errors. Vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs. Misunderstandings frequently arise from poor pronunciation, but with repetition can generally be understood by native speakers in regular

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contact with foreigners attempting to speak their language. Little
precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammati-
cal development and severe limitations of vocabulary.

Intermediate Mid

Able to satisfy a variety of travel and survival needs and lim-
ited social demands. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar
topics and areas of immediate needs. Can initiate and respond to
simple statements and can maintain simple face-to-face conversation.
Can ask and answer questions and carry on a conversation on topics be-
yond basic personal information (i.e., can talk simply about autobio-
graphical details, leisure-time activities, daily schedule, and some
future plans). Misunderstandings arise because of limited vocabulary,
frequent grammatical errors, and poor pronunciation. Speech is often
characterized by long pauses. Greater accuracy in word order, nega-
tion, idafa constructs. Usage of verb endings, tenses, and time rela-
tions may still be inconsistent. Fluency is still strained, but gener-
ally able to be understood by persons used to dealing with foreigners.

Intermediate High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands.
Developing flexibility in language production in range of circumstances
beyond immediate survival needs, although fluency is still uneven.
Can give rather detailed autobiographical information and discuss
leisure-time activities. To a lesser degree can talk about non-
personal topics such as activities of organizations and descriptions
of events, although ability to describe and express information in
these areas is limited. Limited vocabulary range necessitates much
hesitation. Able to express a few thoughts via circumlocutions, but
may insert native language equivalents for unknown words or use native
syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current levels of
linguistic competence. Has tentative use of derived verb forms and the
most common irregular verbs. Can sporadically form and understand
compound and multi-clause utterances, although cannot sustain coherent
structures in longer utterances consistently. Extended discourse is

largely a series of short, discrete utterances. While common word order is established, errors still occur in more complex patterns. Ability to describe and give precise information limited. Comprehensible to speakers used to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances to be understood by the general public.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence, but not facility, most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time in both negative and positive forms. Can communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion, but cannot conjecture (i.e., no use of conditional structures) or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current events, academic activities, work, and leisure pursuits. Needs help in any complications or difficulties. Has easy control of idafa constructs and strong verb forms and tentative control of time relations, relative clauses, derived and weak verb forms. General syntax and word order are correct.

Advanced Plus

Able to satisfy most school and work requirements and shows some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in all time frames. Can consistently communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and handle routine work requirements and some complications. Can handle most situations of everyday life easily handled in MSA, but still has great difficulty with unfamiliar situations--particularly those everyday situations which native speakers themselves find troublesome to deal with in MSA. Normally controls general vocabulary with some groping still evident. Good control of cohesive devices in limited discourse, but errors still occur in more complicated structures. Speaking performance is

often uneven. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.

Superior

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease; can support opinions. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough so that speaker rarely has to grope for a word; good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation may still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Sporadic errors but not patterns of errors in all aspects. Control less consistent in hypothetical and conjectural structures such as ﻝ ... ﻻﻮﻟ, ﻝﻮﻟ...ﺪ, ﺍﺫﺍ , and ﺍﻮ . Varying degrees of competency in usage of idiomatic and colloquial expressions. A small proportion of utterances are still literal translations from the native language. Particular difficulties of MSA, such as compound number-noun phrases, may still be inconsistent or expressed in colloquial Arabic. Errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Guidelines for Listening

Novice Low

No practical understanding of spoken Arabic. Understanding is limited to high-frequency social conventions such as ﻢﻌﻧ, ﻻ, ﺎﺒﺣﺮﻣ, ﻒﻴﻛ and names of well-known cities and Arab countries. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Novice Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs, such as courtesy expressions,

e.g., بخير- كيف الحال؟ ، من انت ؟ . Comprehension of longer utter-
ances requires repetition and usually requires longer pauses. Diffi-
culty in recognizing the differences between unfamiliar consonants,
د .vs ص , ه .vs ح , ت .vs ط , as well as short versus long vowels
of Arabic.

Novice High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized
utterances in areas of immediate needs. Comprehension of slightly
longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding,
such as كم الساعة؟ هل انت طالب ؟ كم طالبا في الصف ؟ Comprehen-
sion of simple statements about family, age, address, and nationality,
such as, كم عمرك ؟ هل لك اخ ؟ اين تسكن ؟ هل انت امريكي ؟
Learners are expected to make errors in word endings but understand
some main ideas of simple conversation. Repetition and/or slow rate
of speech often required for comprehension.

Intermediate -Low

Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances involving
basic survival needs, courtesy, meals, taxi, lodging, and travel re-
quirements, e.g., اين موقف الباص ؟ ناولني الملح من فضلك Can understand
commands from police or custom officials: اين جواز سفرك ؟
Learners can understand simple direc- كم معك من المال؟ افتح حقيبتك.
tions: الفندق قريب من البنك ، اذهب الى اليمين Misunderstand-
ing is frequently caused by lack of vocabulary or by partial and/or im-
perfect mastery of Arabic grammar mainly in verb conjugation and posses-
sive pronoun suffixes of first person versus second person, e.g.,
In areas اين ذهبت ؟ .vs اين ذهبت ؟ / اين كتابي ؟ .vs اين كتابك؟
of immediate needs or very familiar topics can understand non-memorized
material, such as simple questions and statements about weather, e.g.,
اليوم days of the week, ; اليوم هو الاثنين , or dates, اليوم الطقس جميل
هو الست من نيسان .

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Intermediate Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand about some survival needs and some social conventions, such as birthday party, حـــفلة , etc. حفلـة استقبـال , reception, عيـد الميـــلاد ; Christmas, ميـلاد ; Vocabulary permits understanding of topics beyond survival needs, such as personal history, هذه الجـامعة آمل سنتبـــن , ولدت في نيو يـــورك , and hobbies, هوايـتـي الموسيقـــى , etc. Evidence of beginning to understand basic constructions: equational, verbal, and nominal sentences; the use of adjectives and comparative adjectives, simple and complex forms idāfa, word order; and the negation of equational, regular verbal sentences and nominal sentences. Negation of both past and present sentences. Understanding of grammatical structure of simple future and past by references to adverbial phrases, سـادهــــب ٠ دهبت امـس / غـــدا

Intermediate High

Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about most survival needs and limited social conventions. Increasingly able to understand topics beyond immediate survival needs, such as biographical information in which past, present, and future are used, الكويـت السـنة للقـادمـــــة ; امعل الآن في بيروت ;عملت في "القاهــــرة , e.g., ســاعمـــل فـى . Difficulty in subject-verb agreement and different tenses of weak verbs: قلنـا لهم ذلــك . قالـت زوجتـه ؟ الم تقل ذلك . Imprecise understanding of sentences and vocabulary and situations related to the house, daily activities, directions, and simple announcements, e.g., ما هو نوع الاثاث فـى متزلــك ؟ • غرفة النوم . Shows spontaneity in understanding, but speed and consistency of understanding uneven, sometimes necessitates repetition for comprehension. Understanding of major syntactic constructions, perfect, imperfect, and future tenses and their negation. Fair understanding of conditional clauses and relative clauses but miscommunication occurs with more complex patterns and idiomatic usages. Can get gist of conversation, but cannot sustain comprehension in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations, e.g., لو كثّف العرب جهودهم ووحدوا صفوفـهم لكان وضعـهم افـضـل .

Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated. Understanding of description and detailed information is limited.

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversation about routine conventions and limited school or work requirements, e. g., علاقـــة العمل ببعض النشاطات فى نفس المبدان / امتحانـــات / احتماعيـــــات / قبـــول . Able to understand face-to-face nontechnical speech in standard Arabic spoken by a native speaker in controlled context (with repetition, rewording, deliberate enunciation, and slower speed). Able to get the gist of some radio and TV broadcasts, e.g., نشرة الاخـــــبار / الاحـادبث / الخـطب / النـــــدوة , if language used is not highly stylized. Understands everyday topics, e.g., الوضع فى الشـرق الاوســـط /حالة الطقــــس / اهم الحوادث البومبة / الوصـع الثقـافـــى...etc. Understands common personal and family news, زواج / وفـــــاة / ســـفر , etc. Understands simple descriptions and narration about current, past, and future events and essential points of discussion or speech at reasonable level of difficulty on topics in special fields of interest: الهـوابـــة / التاربـــــخ / العـادات والتقالـــبد / "زواج / الفـلـــفة / السبـاسـة...etc.

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conversations on school and/or work requirements and discussions of concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence such as those mentioned in the Advanced level. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure including unfamiliar listening conditions or very stylistic use of the language. Furthermore, may display weakness due to lack of vocabulary or inadequate mastery of complex syntactic structures when involved in face-to-face communication with an educated native speaker, e.y., قراءة بعض الابـبات من الشعر العربـــى القدبـم او الحدبـث الاستشـهاد ببعض الامثـال والحكم العربـبة القدبـــمة. Still demonstrates some difficulty following details of radio or TV

broadcasts. Can on certain occasions detect emotional overtones and make inferences.

Superior

Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard Arabic including technical discussions within a special field. His adequate understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speech in standard Arabic on general topics and areas of special interests, e.g., الاحاديث لمناقشة موضوع معس / الـــــدوات / المؤـمـرات . Can follow and understand hypothesizing and supported opinions. Rarely requests paraphrasing or explanation due to complete mastery of vocabulary of Arabic. Can follow accurately conversations between educated native speakers. Reasonably clear in making telephone calls and understands radio and TV broadcasts, oral reports, short technical reports, and public addresses on nontechnical subjects such as political speeches. Can handle a fair amount of classical Arabic vocabulary and structures commonly used in formal speeches and broadcasts. Can understand a common stock set of phrases and idioms as well as common sayings and proverbs, e.g., فتن عن / الحـــه بعـد اقـدام الامـبهـات / حير الساس انفعهم للـــساس الحـــار قبل الدار . Can understand highly frequent slogans and common honorific terms, e.g., محـــامد الرئـــس / صـاحب الحـلال / صاحب المعـالـن / سـاده الرئـــس . Misunderstanding arises when native speakers use some slang, an unfamiliar dialect or accent, or speak very fast. Can often detect emotional overtones and make inferences.

Guidelines for Reading

Novice Low

No functional ability in reading Arabic.

Novice Mid

No functional ability to read Arabic but can identify the letters. Has difficulty, however, in recognizing all four forms of each letter as well as the way in which these letters are joined to each other in forming words, particularly the همزة and الف مقصوره. Recognizes individual Arabic words from basic memorized vocabulary lists, as well as highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas, such as public signs, e.g., الدخول ممنوع, and building signs, e.g., مطـار ؛ فنـدق ؛ مطـعـم. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive re-reading and checking.

Novice High

Sufficient comprehension of written Arabic to interpret a number of set expressions and memorized material in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all Arabic letters as they occur in any position in a word, including همزة and الف مقصورة. Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read, for instructional and directional purposes, standardized messages, phrases, or expressions, such as some items on menus, كبـة ؛ سلطه; the days of the week, e.g., الاثنين ؛ numbers ranging from one to 10; months; and simple biographical information such as nationality, address, age. Can recognize prepositional phrases using the most common حروف الجـر, e.g., بعـد ؛ في ؛ عن ؛ etc., but is confused as to their meaning. Material is read only for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.

Intermediate Low

Can read, for basic survival and social needs, simplest connected, specially prepared material and recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures. Can puzzle out pieces of some authentic material with considerable difficulty as it reflects similarity to specially prepared material and/or to high-frequency oral vocabulary and structure. Can read simple, hand-written telephone messages, personal notes, or short statements, all of which may contain formulaic greetings, courtesy expressions, queries about personal well-being, age, one's family,

the weather, and time, where such materials are carefully written for
a non-native reader. Recognizes simple present tense, subject-
predicate equational sentences and simple verbal sentences using regu-
lar verbs in the perfect tense, e.g., كتب ; درس ; علم , and/or
high-frequency irregular verbs, e.g., قال ; كان . Can recognize nega-
tive constructions using ليس and ما . Can read numbers from 10
to 100. Misunderstanding may arise when syntax diverges from that of
the native language, or when grammatical cues are overlooked, e.g.,
possessive pronoun suffixes, verb conjugation suffixes, number and gen-
der, and the idāfa.

Intermediate Mid

Can comprehend the general idea and some facts in authentic
material which pertains to survival needs and social purposes such as
public announcements for concerts, celebrations, and meetings. Can
understand a note or letter in which a writer used to dealing with non-
native readers describes self, family, ages, likes and dislikes, daily
routines, hobbies, occupations, and the like, stringing simple nominal
and verbal sentences together with minimal use of relative clauses.
Cannot follow argument or development of thought in any but specially
prepared expository material. Although fairly consistent in interpret-
ing present and past tense for most regular and a number of irregular
verbs, has considerable difficulty in recognizing verbal forms in the
jussive (المجزوم) and subjunctive (المنصوب) tenses. Misunderstand-
ings still arise, as in Intermediate Low, with regard to syntax, sub-
ject and object pronouns, the idāfa, agreement in number and gender be-
tween nouns and adjectives and between verbs and subjects. Does not
recognize the various contexts in which prepositions may occur with
variable meaning, e.g., عليه ان , he has to... vs. اعتمد على , he
depends on; له سيارة , he has a car... vs. اعطاه له , he gave it to
him; nor the dependence of certain verbs on prepositions to create dif-
ferent meanings, e.g., توقف عن ... He discontinued (doing)... vs.
توقف على , It was dependent upon. Has difficulty recognizing weak
verbs other than a few commonly occurring ones, and the derived forms

such as verbal nouns (مصدر) and participles (اسم واسم المفعول)
(الفاعل) .

Intermediate High

Sufficient comprehension to understand a simple paragraph for personal communication, information, or recreational purposes. Can read with understanding invitations, social notes, personal letters, and some simple business letters on familiar topics. Can decode short sections of authentic prose from newspaper or magazine articles or a short uncomplicated fictional narrative for key points of a summary nature with extensive use of a bilingual dictionary. Can follow more extended narrative thread only in specially prepared material. Understands major syntactic constructions, perfect, imperfect, and future tenses and their negation. Reads numbers and dates correctly. Fair understanding of conditional clauses and relative clauses, but misunderstanding occurs with more complex patterns and idiomatic usages. Still experiences difficulty, as in Intermediate-Mid level, in understanding the subjunctive tense, as it follows constructions such as ... حاول ان and استطاع ان ...., and the appropriate meaning of prepositions in different contexts.

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to read edited materials within familiar topic range, e.g., essays adapted from popular newspapers on familiar subjects such as current events, travel, food, music, and prose fiction from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Can read personal and business correspondence. Command of vocabulary and familiarity with syntactical construction is still too limited to permit extensive reading in authentic prose. Perception of time relations through the uses of certain time indicators may not be consistently accurate, e.g., كان قد عمل ؛ كان عمل ؛ قد عمل ؛ عمل . Increased understanding of conditional clauses, relative clauses, and certain more complex patterns and idioms. Recognizes frequently used structures such as negatives, interrogatives, and adverbs of place and time. Misunderstanding of preposition use after verbs still exists. As far

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as total comprehension is concerned, is able to read facts but cannot extend them or put them together to draw inferences.

Advanced Plus

Has acquired sufficient knowledge of vocabulary within own field of interest·to read technical material from relevant scholarly areas, though mastery of مصطلحات is limited to words of high frequency. With the help of a bilingual dictionary, can read articles on familiar topics from popular newspapers such as الاهرام and السيار . Readily identifies a wide variety of grammatical and syntactical structures. Has no difficulty comprehending conditional and relative clauses and in distinguishing clauses with indefinite antecedents. Is sufficiently familiar with the ten forms of the verb occasionally to elucidate meaning of unfamiliar derived forms encountered in reading, based on his acquaintance with the radical stem in form I; e.g., اعتهم from مهم ,اقتصر على from معر . Literary reading is confined to modern works and demands considerable effort. Often unable to pick up nuances, draw proper inferences, or appreciate different styles in literary works. Not yet ready for classical/medieval ادب material.

Superior

Can read newspaper articles and other examples of expository prose written in Modern Standard Arabic (الفصحى) such as editorials and magazine essays. Able to follow the general argument and progression of ideas in such prose without reference at all to a dictionary; can establish precise meaning of each sentence with only limited dictionary use. Can read modern popular novels and dramas with some dictionary use and, with substantial effort and dictionary use, read examples of "classical" and modern poetry. With considerable difficulty can read printed editions of contemporary regional colloquial literature. Emerging appreciation of nuances and stylistics of composition; for example, readily recognizes use of irony, manipulation of point of view, and author's selection of lexical items chosen to enhance emotional impact on reader. Able to read limited amounts of classical and

medieval material ranging from the القـــــرآن and التفـــــــــير commen-
taries to al-Jāhiḍ and al-Hamaḍānī, with overall comprehension limited
by frequent gaps in detail and individual lexical items.

Guidelines for Writing

Novice Low

No functional ability in writing Arabic. Writes isolated char-
acters and lacks control with regard to shape and position.

Novice Mid

No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy iso-
lated words or short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied
words or phrases but lacks control in writing the correct shape of cer-
tain letters according to their position in a given word. Still has
difficulty with long vowels versus short vowels, عيـــــن .vs همـــزة ,
هــ vs.ع, ق vs. ك, and خ vs. ح ,.e.g. عيـــن / ابن / نحر / نهر,
حضر / محضر , قل / كـل . Has almost no knowledge of the rules pertain-
ing to the transcription of the همزة , except in initial position.

Novice High

Able to write simple fixed expressions and memorized material
in area of immediate need. Can supply basic information, when re-
quested, on forms such as hotel registration, passports, and other
travel documents. Can memorize common Arabic names, nationality,
address, and other simple biographical information. Can tell the days
of the week, months, but still lacks control of telling numbers (mixes
genders and is almost unable to tell numbers beyond ten). Can write
all the symbols of the alphabet, although the difficulties encountered
at the Novice-Mid level still persist.

Intermediate Low

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited
everyday needs. Spelling mistakes of the Novice-Mid level still occur

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but less frequently. Can write simple and short messages such as
simple questions/answers, personal notes, phone messages, etc. Can
create simple statements or questions: writes sentences using regular
verbs in the past tense, affirmative statements consisting of simple
equational sentences in the present tense: uses the negative with ــــــ
and interrogative constructions within the scope of limited language
experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned
vocabulary and structures into simple sentences with mistakes in declen-
sion, conjugation, and agreement. Vocabulary is limited to everyday
common objects and is inadequate to express anything but elementary
needs. Can express numbers from 1-10 and 10-100, counting by ten.
Often inserts foreign vocabulary for unknown words and is generally
not capable of circumlocutions to get meaning across. Writing tends
to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very
familiar topics (general routine, basic needs). Makes continuous
errors in spelling, grammar, and choice of words, but writing can be
read and understood by native readers used to dealing with foreigners.

Intermediate Mid

Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival
needs and some limited social demands. Able to compare short para-
graphs or take simple notes on very familiar topics grounded in per-
sonal experience. Can discuss likes and dislikes (using اعجب), daily
routines; discuss everyday personal occurrences; describe immediate sur-
roundings (house, work, school); narrate simple events and the like.
Has difficulty dealing with dates and numbers (other than multiples of
ten). Can use most regular verbs correctly in the past tense and
writes simple equational sentences correctly in the present tense. Mis-
takes still occur with word order, subject and object pronouns, idāfa,
noun-adjective and verb-subject/subject-verb agreement. Uses preposi-
tions but the choice is often influenced by the native language. Does
not use relative clauses, rendering the written material a sequence of
short and simple phrases. Competence is limited to factual statements
and observations on concrete situations. Competence in grammar is lim-
ited to the aforementioned categories. May occasionally use a number

of regular verbs in the present tense or a number of memorized irregular verbs in the past tense (e.g., كـان). When resorting to a dictionary, can easily find infinitive or regular form I but has difficulties with other forms and derivational patterns.

Intermediate.High

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions, and narration of everyday events and situations), and respond to personal questions on such topics using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can write simple letters, brief synopses, paraphrases, summaries of biographical data related to personal history, study, or work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately the past tense, but occasionally makes mistakes when using irregular verbs, and expresses less accurately the present tense and the future. Can express numbers and dates correctly. Shows a control of basic syntactic patterns and word order, but usually lacks it when using negation (e.g., لن ، عبـر ، لبـس ، لم اكـن , etc.). Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts, especially those requiring the use of the subjunctive (e.g., استطيـع ان / بمكن ان / اريد ان , etc.), relative pronouns, حبـث , object pronouns, and differentiation in agreement between human and nonhuman plurals. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although can use the dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally, does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocution, but may insert native language translation equivalents for unknown words or use native syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current levels of linguistic competence, e.g.,

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بنــــاول .vs بنــاول هذا النـــمى مـــع , بالعربيــة .vs مي العربيـــــة
كلمنــــي .vs كلـم الى / لـ , هذا النـــمى. Limited ability to sustain
long composition or give detailed information.

Advanced

Able to write routine work or social correspondence and simple
discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write
simple social correspondence (using some Arabic literary expressions
of social formalities and salutations), take notes, and write cohesive
summaries, resumes, and short narratives and descriptions on factual
topics related to personal and working experience. Able to write about
everyday topics (study, work, and leisure activities) using common ad-
jectives and adverbs with mostly correct agreement (human plurals vs.
nonhuman plurals) and word order. Able to narrate events using verbs
and other elements in correct time relations, although the contrast be-
tween the uses of certain time indicators may not be consistently accu-
rate (e.g., اتممت ، قد اتممت ، كنت اتممت ، كنت قد اتممت . Has suf-
ficient writing vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circum-
locutions. Can write about a very limited number of current events or
daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in
some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaning-
ful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropri-
ately; writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts
is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times.
Good control of morphology, although occasionally makes mistakes with
some irregular roots, especially those of the "defective" group. Con-
trols frequently used structures such as negatives, interrogatives,
and adverbs of place and time. Preposition use after verbs is often
inaccurate and reflects a paraphrase from the native language. Uses a
limited number of cohesive devices such as pronouns, conjunctions, and
other connectors with good accuracy. Able to join sentences in
limited discourse but has difficulty when producing complex sentences.
Pays close attention to punctuation practices. Writing is understand-
able to a native speaker not used to reading compositions written by
non-natives. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

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Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with some precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can handle most social and informal business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply points of view in prose discourse using introductory sentences (e.g., لا اظـــن انا ، لا ارى انــا ، في رأيـــي ، مي طنـــي).
Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Controls general vocabulary with circumlocation or modification where necessary, e.g., may use negation plus lexical item for an unknown antonym, or modify words with كنيــــر / جـــدا / للعـاب , etc., if a more specific term is unknown. Often shows remarkable fluency or ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite) and pressure (e.g., testing) language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness may involve detail in the use of simple constructions: "broken" plurals, prepositions, etc. Weaknesses are also observed in more complex structures: relative clauses, double object structures, passive constructions, and conditional clauses. Simple misuse of vocabulary still present, especially when using a dictionary for words with multiple meanings, or where related words carry various functions; but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exists. Shows little diversity of style in writing on different topics. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written Arabic effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closings), short

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research papers, and statements of position in areas of special
interest or in special fields. Can express hypotheses, conjecture,
and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively.
Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special
fields, in addition to most common topics. Has good control of a full
range of structures and vocabulary so that time, description, and
narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures
are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition
to simple time frames, can use sequential time indicators to show time
relationships among events and to express ideas clearly and coherently,
but errors are made when using complex structures such as relative and
conditional clauses. Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the mes-
sage accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary with a
high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to im-
prove content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal
and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accu-
rately to different topics and readers. Writing is fully comprehen-
sible to native readers not used to reading non-Arabic writings.

A Model of Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement
Testing for Elementary Arabic

A Model of Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Testing for Elementary Arabic

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this article is to provide a description of a proposed proficiency-based oral achievement test for elementary Arabic instruction. It begins with background information about the materials used for elementary Arabic at the University of Michigan, the rationale for testing oral skills at this level, and a brief description of the types of oral testing of Arabic that have been attempted during the past two years. The major part of this article provides a detailed description of the proficiency-based oral achievement test including its format, scoring procedure, administration, and implications. Included are a test facsimile and sample items.

A. Introduction[1]

In my paper entitled "Arabic Proficiency Test: Implementation and Implication," which was first presented at the American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA) panel held in conjunction with the 1982 Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting and then published in *Al-Arabiyya* (Rammuny, 11), I called for "the development of clearly defined proficiency-based goals for the three levels of Arabic instruction (elementary, intermediate and advanced), the selection of teaching materials and methods to meet these new learning goals, and finally the construction of proficiency-based tests to evaluate the attainment of the specific goals set for each level." "The main objective of this redirection in the Arabic teaching profession," I added, "is to insure turning out competent graduates who can understand Arabic with ease and use it effectively."

In a serious attempt to implement this call, we began the fall semester of 1982 at the University of Michigan with a set of proficiency-based goals for the three levels of Arabic instruction. These goals included the areas of speaking, listening, reading, writing and culture. Our primary objective in this endeavor was to train students, as early as the elementary level, to become competent linguistically and communicatively in the use of oral and written Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).

This new focus in Arabic teaching led us to combine the "audiolingual" approach of *Elementary Modern Standard Arabic* (EMSA)—the textbook used in our elementary Arabic classes—with the current "communicative" approach. The use of this type of integrative methodology required that we supplement the existing materials found in *EMSA* with various types of *contextualized* and *meaningful* drills, structured role-playing and group communicative activities centering around such themes as the family, clothing, restaurant and airport situations. This helped in making *EMSA* serve more fully our new goals and teaching methodology by providing students with active practical vocabulary and personalized practice during a weekly conversation hour aimed at building their competence in basic interactive communicative situations. Here, we were influenced to a large extent by the functional-notional syllabus (Wilkins, 13; Harlow, Smith and Garfinkel, 3) and the ACTFL Guidelines (Liskin-Gasparro, 7) in determining the functional learning tasks appropriate for the elementary level of instruction in Arabic.

Students were held responsible for the content of these supplemental items during oral testing, which

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was given at the end of each semester and at the con-
clusion of the elementary level. Oral testing has been
a regular part of elementary Arabic instruction at the
University of Michigan for the past two years.

It should be noted here that the basis of our goals
and teaching methodology in the Arabic language pro-
gram in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the
University of Michigan is the proficiency movement
discussed in *Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing
Principle* (Higgs, ed., 5) and *Foreign Language Pro-
ficiency in the Classroom and Beyond* (James, ed.,
4)—although in a somewhat modified form. In this
regard, the specific functions of both MSA and the
two major Arabic dialects offered at our university,
namely, Colloquial Egyptian and Colloquial Levan-
tine, are discussed and clarified from the first day of
class. There is no confusion whatsoever in the minds
of our students, therefore, about the appropriate use
of each form of Arabic. All students learn that MSA
is used primarily for reading, writing, and listening in
specific circumstances (i.e., radio, television, formal
lectures and speeches) and that the colloquial dialects
are used primarily for everyday conversation including
such activities as travel, food, family, lodging, work,
socializing, etc.

The use of MSA in the classroom as a medium of
oral communication on such topics as travel, fami-
ly, work, and daily life in general is meant primarily
to assist students in their effort to internalize newly
learned vocabulary and structures and to perform vari-
ous learning tasks and activities successfully. Certainly,
no harm is expected from the use of MSA for oral
communication based on the materials used inside the
class so long as the students understand the real pur-
pose behind such use. Therefore, the problem of which
form of Arabic to teach and, subsequently, which kind
of proficiency goals or guidelines to set up—because
of the basic differences between MSA and the collo-
quial dialects, or because of a lack of consensus in the
Arabic teaching profession today (Allen, 1; Parkinson,
10)—has been resolved in our Arabic language pro-
gram since 1982.

B. Oral Testing in Elementary Arabic:
   1. Rationale
At the University of Michigan, we view the testing
of oral skills as an integral component of elementary
Arabic instruction for three reasons. First, among the
proficiency-based goals established for the elementary
level, one clearly promises acquisition of speaking
skills that will enable students to communicate in
MSA on topics familiar to them. Second, the recent
addition of task-oriented activities for developing

spoken production in our elementary Arabic cur-
riculum has made the inclusion of oral testing in-
dispensable (Rammuny, 12). And third, students
themselves typically indicate that among the primary
reasons for their study of Arabic is for its use in oral
communica   ˜ ²

2. Proficiency Versus Achievement Tests
Before presenting a description of our model of
proficiency-based oral achievement testing for ele-
mentary Arabic, which is designed to help prepare
students for the proficiency-based oral interview to be
administered at the end of the elementary level, we
need to offer some brief observations on proficiency
and achievement tests in general.

These two types of tests have their proper place in
language testing. The proficiency or global test is
usually given at the end of each level of language in-
struction or for placement purposes in order to
measure the overall proficiency attained by students.
It is an integrative test which is mainly concerned with
effective and appropriate use of the language in
general, without regard to the body of material covered
in class. The achievement or progress test, on the other
hand, occurs after each unit, group of units, or
semester in order to measure students' acquisition of
the specific content of the unit(s) or the language
course. Most achievement tests include discrete-point
items based on the material that has been learned.

The proficiency-based oral achievement test, which
is the subject of the next section of this paper, allows
us the opportunity to develop oral tests which provide
for a step-by-step progression from achievement
toward proficiency or global evaluation.

3. Types of Tests
We have been experimenting with oral tests for the
past two years. Last year, we administered an oral com-
munication test to our elementary students of Arabic
as part of the final examination. The test consisted of
two parts. Part One contained fifteen structured, in.er-
view-type items following Canale's (2) thematic four-
stage administration approach. Each student was
asked a series of questions related to a theme different
from that given to other students. In administering this
type of oral test, the tester begins with simple questions
(such as *ma ismuk?* 'What is your name?' and *min
ayna ant?* 'Where are you from?') and continues to
more intricate questions involving noun-adjective
agreement, verb tenses, subjunctive and jussive par-
ticles (such as *mādhā sataf‘alu fī al-ṣayfī al-qādim?*
'What will you do next summer?' and *limādhā tadrusu
al-‘arabiyyah?* 'Why are you studying Arabic?') until

the highest level of performance by the student is reached. The tester ends the session with questions at the student's sustained level of performance to encourage a sense of accomplishment on the part of the student. The second part of this test required the testee to describe the contents of a picture given to him by the tester utilizing familiar vocabulary and grammatical structures.

For this test, a simple scoring sheet was used to measure the student's performance. The three areas of assessment were: grammatical accuracy, communication, and fluency. The test was administered and evaluated by the two Arabic teaching assistants involved in elementary Arabic instruction, with my assistance.

Under a small grant from the U.S. Department of Education obtained through the Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, I am involved during this academic year in a project to develop several models for the testing and evaluation of oral skills in students at the three levels of Arabic instruction. Based on our current teaching methodology, which combines the best features of both the *structural* and *communicative* approaches, we have started work on the production of two major oral tests for students of elementary Arabic.

The first of these is the proficiency-based oral achievement test. This test is to be given at the end of each semester of elementary Arabic instruction, as part of the final examination. The second test is the proficiency-based oral interview, which is a refinement of the oral communication test we experimented with last year. This is to be administered at the conclusion of the elementary level of instruction. Both of these models, it should be noted, reflect the goals and activities followed in elementary Arabic instruction at the University of Michigan. The present paper is limited to a presentation and discussion of the first of these two models, namely, the Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test.

The Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test is structured and organized in four stages. It proceeds from the stage of pronunication and rote memory, through the stage of lexical recall and grammatical structures, to the stage of controlled oral practice and personalized communication. The investigator believes that gradual movement from recognition and *meaningful* structured practice toward more personalized and *open-ended* communication is needed in a proficiency-oriented methodology, and should be implemented as soon as possible in the very early stage of language instruction (Omaggio, 9; Magnan, 8; Higgs and Clifford, 4). Specifically, the Proficiency-

Basecd Oral Achievement Test for Elementary Arabic consists of the following components: pronunciation and rote memory, lexical recall, grammatical structures, and communication. Each of these is described below.

Section One: Pronunciation and Rote Memory

The primary objective of this portion of the oral test is to assess the student's ability to pronounce accurately the sounds of MSA, particularly those sounds peculiar to Arabic and oftentimes problematic for beginning students. In order to assess this, each testee is asked to recall several items from memory. This involves recalling one of three poems that the students have memorized during the first semester of Elementary Arabic (namely, *"habībaū antī"* 'You are my sweetheart;' *"?ilā ṭiflaū suzān"* 'To my child Susan'; and *"ughniyatī maʿa al-ṭuyūr'* 'Singing with the birds'), and one of the following sets of items: the days of the week, seven items of food, seven colors, seven Arab countries or capitals.

The maximum number of points possible for this section of the test is thirty (30). Sixteen (16) points are given for the poem, of which one point is subtracted for each missing or incorrectly pronounced word; and fourteen (14) points are given for the second set of items, one point for each item and another point for accurate pronunciation (see Appendix I, Section 1).

Section Two: Lexical Recall

The principal objective of this portion of the test is to assess the student's acquisition and mastery of a basic lexicon appropriate for the elementary level. Here, the testee is required to respond orally to a series of pictures presented to him by giving the lexical item represented in the picture. Each testee is requested to respond to ten (10) pictures that are randomly chosen from a pool of fifty (50) items. These items include most of the concrete vocabulary contained in the first eighteen lessons of *EMSA* and in the supplemental material provided to students in class.[3]

The number of points for this section is thirty (30). Two points are awarded for each acceptable lexical item and one point for accurate pronunciation.

Section Three: Grammatical Structures

The purpose of this section of the oral test is to ensure the student's mastery and control of basic grammatical structures that have already been covered in the first eighteen lessons of the EMSA textbook. These include noun-adjective agreement, verb-subject concord, adverbials, case inflections, cardinal and ordinal numbers, *idāfa* constructions, and negative and inter-

rogative particles. Here, each student is asked ten (10) structured questions based on themes familiar to him/her. From a selection of five possible themes (i.e., study, family, food, travel, and clothing), the test administrator randomly selects three themes to be offered to a given testee. Of these three, the testee chooses one theme around which evolve the structured questions of the dialogue. Although the questions vary from one testee to another, the question type remains the same. This strategy has been chosen in order to help optimize student performance on the test while, at the same time, maintain a sense of random selection, test reliability and content validity. A model of sample questions is given below (Theme: Study).

---

1. *matā haḍarta ?ilā hādhihi al-jāmiᶜah?*
   'When did you come to this university?'

2. *wa-?ayna darasta qabla dhālika?*
   'And where did you study before that?'

3. *?ayya al-lughāti al-ajnabiyyati darasta fi al-madrasati al-thānawiyyah?*
   'What foreign languages did you study in secondary school?'

4. *hal haṣalta ᶜalā shahādatin fi al-lughāt?*
   'Did you obtain a degree in foreign languages?'

5. *man yudarrisukum al-lughata al-ᶜarabiyyata al-?āna?*
   'Who teaches you the Arabic language now?'

6. *kam dursan fi al-ᶜarabiyyati tadrusūna fi al-?usbūᶜ?*
   'How many lessons of Arabic do you study per week?'

7. *matā tabdo?u dursa al-lughati al-ᶜarabiyyati yawma al-?ithnayn?*
   'When do you start Arabic classes on Mondays?'

8. *mādha taᶜmalu baᶜda al-dars?*
   'What do you do after the lesson?'

9. *hal laka aṣdiqā?au min al-ṭullābi al-ᶜarabi fi al-jāmiᶜah?*
   'Do you have Arab friends in the university?'

10. *mādha yuᶜjibuka fi jāmiᶜati michigan?*
    'What do you like about the University of Michigan?'

The number of points possible in this part of the test is also thirty (30). A student's responses are scored on the basis of grammatical accuracy, as well as appropriate vocabulary usage and sentence form. The precise distribution of points is shown on the scale below:

0 points: no response [−grammar, −usage]
1 point: inappropriate response [−grammar, +usage]
2 points: acceptable response [+grammar, −usage]
3 points: accurate response [+grammar, +usage]

Section Four: Communication

The objective of this section is to assess, in a general way, the overall communicative competence of the testee on a scale appropriate for the elementary, or novice, student. In particular, this section focuses on the following skills: comprehension, fluency, usage and cultural awareness. In administering this portion of the test, the student is given a cue card (with subscripts in English) and is requested to conduct a personalized interview consisting of five questions and/or responses which the students have practiced in class. The interview is conducted with a guest instructor of Arabic or competent graduate student whom the testee does not know well. The specific theme of the interview and the testee's role as a questioner or respondent will depend on the particular set of cue cards used and the person given the card, the testee or the guest. Following is a sample cue card.

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1. Greet the guest.
2. Ask his/her name.
3. Ask what he/she does.
4. Ask where he/she lives.
5. Thank the guest.

The number of points possible on this part of the test is ten (10). The student's performance on this part of the test is evaluated on the basis of comprehension, fluency, appropriate vocabulary usage and cultural awareness. The precise distribution of points is as follows:

0 points: null or inappropriate response
[−comprehension, −usage, −cultural awareness]

1 point: acceptable response
[+comprehension, +/−usage, +/−fluency, +/−cultural awareness]

2 points: appropriate response
[+comprehension, +usage, +cultural awareness]

In examining the percentage distribution of these four skill areas of the test, you will note that vocabulary makes up forty percent (40%) of the test score; pronunciation, twenty-five percent (25%); grammatical accuracy, twenty-five percent (25%); and fluency in communication along with usage and cultural awareness, ten percent (10%). These percentages reflect the emphasis, as mentioned earlier, that we give to each of these skills at the elementary level of Arabic instruction.

3. Test Administration

The Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test is given as part of the final examination at the end of each semester of Elementary Arabic at the University of Michigan. Each oral interview takes from 5-7 minutes and is administered in a classroom by three persons: the course supervisor, a teaching assistant (scorer) and a guest instructor or graduate student. Under ideal conditions, it is recommended that the *tester* and the *guest interviewer* be the same person. This will help create a better affective testing environment for the testee, thus encouraging him/her to function more competently.

A week before the final examination the course supervisor meets with the teaching assistant(s) and guest instructor or graduate student to discuss the content, administration and grading procedures of the oral test. In particular, the specific tasks and duties of each person are discussed. Usually, the course supervisor conducts the oral interview while the teaching assistant scores the testee's performance on a prepared

rating scale. The guest instructor/graduate student is invited to participate in the communication section of the test in order to create a natural-like situation, since he/she is unfamiliar to the testee. A sample videotaped oral interview is usually shown to the students before they take the oral test. This allows them to see exactly how the test is conducted, which in turn makes them feel more at ease during the actual interview. Also, I should mention here that it is difficult to score an oral test during the testing session because of the natural speed of conversation. It is therefore recommended that a testee be given a pause of about five seconds before giving his response and that, if possible, the oral interview be recorded on tape to allow for more accurate evaluation of the student's performance.

In order to reduce anxiety and to help students respond with confidence, the tester should remember to repeat the questions or instructions if the testee asks for repetition of the question or clarification of the directions and, when necessary, to provide cues to lead the response. This is intended to motivate students during the oral testing process and encourage them to display their speaking abilities with confidence.

4. Implications

The Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test has four implications for elementary Arabic instruction in particular. First, oral testing requires the integration of task-oriented material into our existing curriculum. This includes such things as more practical vocabulary, cultural expressions and communicative activities than we currently have. These activities will encourage students to acquire basic speaking skills, which will enable them to communicate in Arabic as early as the first semester of instruction. Examples of communicative strategies for the three levels of Arabic instruction are given in a paper that I presented at the AATA Methodology Panel held in conjunction with the 1984 MESA Annual Meeting (Rammuny, 12).

Second, oral testing requires reorienting our teaching methodology from the *audiolingual* approach, which gives priority to the sound and structured system of a language over communication, to an integrative approach stressing both accuracy and fluency, with special attention given to the area of learning processes and the strategies needed for successful learning.

Third, the positive responses from our students of Arabic toward oral testing indicate that there is a definite need for systematic, formal evaluation of oral skills among students of elementary Arabic at least once or twice a semester, following the model of the Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test described in this paper. This will serve students in several ways.

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First, it will considerably improve their communicative abilities. Second, it will motivate students toward oral practice in general. And third, it will prepare them for the Proficiency-Based Oral Interview in MSA which is given at the conclusion of the elementary level of Arabic instruction.

5. Conclusions

To conclude, the Proficiency-Based Oral Achievement Test for Arabic has given us some important insights in evaluating the oral skills of elementary students of Arabic. We are now aware of the complexities involved in the preparation and implementation of oral tests, especially with respect to questions of authenticity and validity of content, tasks, setting, administration and evaluation. In spite of the apparent difficulties facing us during the preparation and application of this proposed oral test, we are encouraged by this experiment to expand proficiency-based testing in Arabic to the other content areas of listening, reading, and writing, taking into serious consideration the sociolinguistic and psychometric principles underlying foreign language testing.[4]

NOTES

[1]This article is based on a paper by the same title presented at the AATA Pedagogy Panel held in conjunction with the Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, November 1985.

[2]Over the past three years, we have surveyed the 132 students of Elementary Arabic at the University of Michigan to get their opinions on why they study Arabic. Of these, 102 students (or 78 percent) indicated that they study Arabic in order to use it for oral communication.

[3]These eighteen (18) lessons of *EMSA* are usually covered by the end of the first semester of Arabic here at the University of Michigan.

[4]The author wishes to thank Mr. Dawud At-Tauhidi, as well as the anonymous readers who read the manuscript after it was submitted to *Foreign Language Annals* for consideration, for their constructive comments and valuable recommendations.

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Appendix I

SAMPLE PROFICIENCY-BASED ORAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST:

Evaluation Checklist

Section One: *Pronunciation and Rote Memory*

1. Recitation of poem *"ḥablbaʔ anti"* 'You are my sweetheart!

Instructions:

Tester: Sixteen (16) points are given for this portion of the test. One (1) point is to be subtracted for each missing or incorrectly pronounced word. Circle any missing words and underline any words that are mispronounced.

Testee: You have been given three short poems to memorize during the course of this semester. Please choose and recite any one of these three poems.

عدّي على اصابع اليدين ما يأتي

فاولا حبيبتي أنت

وثانيا حبيبتي أنت

وثالثا حبيبتي أنت

ورابعا وخامسا وسادسا وسابعا

وثامنا وتاسعا وعاشرا

حبيبتي أنت

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2. *Days of the week*

Scoring Instructions:

Tester: Fourteen (14) points are given for this portion of the test. One (1) point is to be subtracted for each missing or incorrectly pronounced word. Record the student's responses and underline any words that are mispronounced.

Testee: I have chosen for you three sets of vocabulary items: days of the week, food, and Arab states. Choose any one of these categories and recite seven items from it.

Score	Pronun-ciation	Response
2		الأحد
2		الاشنين
2		الثلاثاء
2		الاربعاء
1	X	(الخميس) الكميس
2		الجمعة
0		(السبت)

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                          │     11      │
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Section Two: *Lexical Recall*

Instructions:

Tester: Ten (10) picture cues are randomly chosen from a pool of fifty (50) possible items. Thirty (30) points are given for this portion of the test: two (2) points for each acceptable lexical item and one (1) point for accurate pronunciation. Record the student's responses and underline any words that are mispronounced.

Testee: Ten picture cues have been chosen for you. Look carefully at each picture and then give the Arabic name for the item contained in the picture.

Score	Pronun-ciation	Response
3		طائرة
3		سيّارة
3		كتاب
3		لوح
3		بيض
2	X	(قلم) كلم
3		عنب
2	٪	(ملعقة) ملعكة
2	X	(خبز) كبز
3		كرسيّ

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Section Three: *Grammatical Structures*

Instructions:

Tester: A set of ten (10) structured questions based on a familiar theme is chosen from a pool of three (3) topics. A maximum of thirty (30) points is given for this portion of the test. Record the student's responses, underline any inappropriate items, and then check the appropriate box based on the overall response of the testee.

Testee: I have chosen for you five familiar topics: study, family, food, travel and clothing. Ten structured questions will be asked on one of these topics. Be sure to give complete answers. Which one of these topics would you like us to talk about?

Score				Response
0	1	2	3	
		2		درست في هذه الجامعة قبل سنة (حضرت الى)
			3	درست في مدرسة شانوية
			3	درست اللغة الفرنسية
			3	لا،لم احصل على شهادة في الفرنسية
			3	الاستاذ هاني صباغ والاستاذ عبد المجيد
	1			تدرسون درسين في الاسبوع (ندرس)
	1			يبدأ شد.انية ساعة (الساعة الثامنة)
			3	أذهب الى المكتبة
			3	نعم ،لي اصدقاء عرب
			3	اعجبتني المكتبة

0 = no response [−grammar. −usage]
1 = inappropriate response [−grammar. +usage]
2 = acceptable response [+grammar. −usage]
3 = accurate response [+grammar. +usage]

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Section Four: *Communication*

Instructions:

Tester: A set of five (5) cues in English are to be supplied to the interviewer. A maximum of ten (10) points is given for this portion of the test. Record the student's responses and check the appropriate box based on the overall performance of the testee.

Testee: I will give you five cues in English. Please use these cues in your Arabic conversation with the guest.

> 1. Greet the guest.
> 2. Ask his/her name.
> 3. Ask what he/she does.
> 4. Ask where he/she lives.
> 5. Thank the guest.

Score

0	1	2		Response
		2		مرحبا
		2		انا هنري ومن أنت ؟
		2		كيف الحال اليوم ؟
		2		ماذا تعملين ؟
		2		شكرا

0=no response [−comprehension, −usage, −fluency, −cultural awareness]
1=inappropriate response [+comprehension, +/−usage, fluency, or cultural awareness]
2=acceptable response [+comprehension, +usage, +fluency, +cultural awareness]

10

Total Scores	
Section	Score
1. Pronunciation	24
2. Vocabulary	27
3. Grammar	25
4. Communication	10
GRAND TOTAL:	86

The Arabic Guidelines:
Where Now?

In this article, written especially for the project, Roger Allen describes how the provisional Arabic guidelines (reprinted as the first article of this appendix) evolved from the ACTFL generic guidelines, the context in which they were first written, and the questions that need to be considered when re-writing them.

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THE ARABIC GUIDELINES: WHERE NOW?

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A Little History

In 1981 ACTFL obtained two grants: one to prepare a set of generic descriptions which would, it was hoped, be applicable to verbal activities in all languages; and a second to begin the process of introducing the Oral Proficiency Interview (long used in the language schools of the federal government's various agencies as a means of testing oral skills) to universities, colleges and schools. A year later, ACTFL guidelines for French, Spanish, and German were published. The year 1983 witnessed the foundation of ACTFL's first regional center for proficiency at the University of Pennsylvania. In the same year there was a second proficiency project to write guidelines for Russian, Chinese and Japanese. In 1984 the regional center (mentioned above) decided to hold a large-scale workshop on oral proficiency testing, and, at the behest of my colleague, Barbara Freed, Vice-Dean for Language Instruction in the College of Arts & Sciences, Arabic was included. Four people from the University of Pennsylvania and one from Georgetown University began the process of becoming ACTFL-certified testers. Not surprisingly, the sessions were extremely lively. Our trainer was a government tester, accustomed to testing candidates in a single register of Arabic which was neither Modern Standard Arabic nor a colloquial; the interviewees were all from an institution (the University of Pennsylvania) where Modern Standard Arabic is taught as a spoken language. An end-product of the discussions during the workshop was the decision to apply for funds to write some preliminary guidelines for Modern Standard Arabic, if only for our own use at the University of Pennsylvania. This will, I trust, help to explain why the Provisional Guidelines for Arabic are written for the Modern Standard Language. The program that I coordinate had by that time decided to use proficiency as a means of evaluation in Arabic language courses at our elementary level (thus replicating similar decisions by our language faculty teaching French, German, Russian, Chinese and Japanese). We felt a desperate need for a yardstick against which to try to measure what we were doing. The guidelines were the assuredly imperfect result of our efforts. It has been suggested that they be renamed (for the time being, until they are rewritten) "Guidelines for Modern Standard Arabic," an idea which seems to me both accurate and eminently sensible.

The original set of ACTFL generic guidelines (descriptions in English of the various levels of proficiency, postulated as being applicable to all languages) had meanwhile come under fire for being too Indo-European in focus; these comments came in particular from teachers of East Asian languages who found the hierarchization of tenses and the assumption of inflection (among other things) inapplicable. A new set of generic guidelines has now been published. All language-specific guidelines will now have to be at least recast in the light of these changes and adjustments. The process of producing guidelines is now viewed as a continuing one, rather than what some people (and particularly those opposed to the notion of proficiency) have previously regarded as a canonization in stone. This is indicated by the omission of the term "provisional" from the new set of generic guidelines, a move which some have seen as threatening, but which in reality liberates the profession from the implication that something to follow will be other than "provisional," i.e. permanent and unchanging. Language research will, of course, continue, and the guidelines can, and no doubt, will benefit from any new findings and ideas.

The Arabic provisional guidelines were adopted by ACTFL in November 1985 at about the same time as the new generic guidelines were published, not so much for implementation in that version, but rather so that they could be subsumed under the large project to rework all the language-specific

guidelines. All of which constitutes an explanation of what the Arabic guidelines are supposed to imply, and, equally important, what they are NOT supposed to imply.

Commentary

It is reasonably obvious from the above narrative, I believe, that the guidelines for Arabic, as they currently exist, fall somewhere along a spectrum between the applied linguistic theory implicit in the concept of proficiency and the pedagogical impetus which led a group of Arabic teachers at one particular institution to take the step of writing a provisional set. Before discussing the guidelines themselves--the problems implicit in them and the future, I would like to explore in turn the notion of proficiency as it pertains to Arabic as a language system and the pedagogical situation in the United States (and by implication elsewhere in Western academe) as I interpret it.

(A) Proficiency and Arabic

The goal of proficiency-based instruction and testing is, of course, to place the learner in the native-speaking context. With that in mind, it has to be said at the outset that no child in the Arab World learns Modern Standard Arabic in the home as a first language. It is learned mostly within the educational system, and thus the ability to use it, whether for reading and writing or for the oral skills, is directly linked to the educational process. But here already we come up against what might be called the politico-cultural dimension of the language within the native-speaking area, since the way(s) in which the standard language is used as a means of oral communication will vary widely from one state and/or dialect area to another. Charles Ferguson in his pioneering study of diglossia in Arabic (Word 15 [1959]) suggests that among criteria which may tend to stimulate linguistic unification are: increased literacy, increased communication, and the desire for a standard national language. A great deal more research on the current state of affairs is necessary before it is possible to draw any specific conclusions, but one can already point to the vast increase in television viewing and telephone traffic as indicators of a possible trend in the directions that he indicates. (Both Carolyn Killean [University of Chicago] in studies in the Linguistic Sciences Vol.10 no.2, Fall 1980, 165-78, and more recently H.S. Wolfson [University of Pennsylvania] in an unpublished paper entitled "Toward an understanding of levels of language in Arabic: An analysis of Arabic use by the broadcast media," have produced data which is almost certainly of interest in our present context.) As further illustration one can note that many states, and particularly the more traditional Islamic States, regularly demand the use of Modern Standard Arabic as the major form of communication in public, not just at university lectures and the like, but at all meetings outside the family home. We will address below the register of language which is implied by this fact, but it is clearly to be distinguished from the colloquial dialect of the area. One of the primary means by which these states are endeavoring to foster and expand this use of the standard language is through television programming for children. This can be seen almost daily on television programs in which children can be seen talking to each other with apparently unrehearsed spontaneity in fluent, standard (i.e. written) Arabic. I have now heard stories from the Gulf Region of children objecting to their own parents' use of a more colloquial register when they, the children, are being exposed to and trained in the virtues of the standard language through television, which our own Sesame Street has now shown a generation of American and British parents to be a most powerful educator.

It should immediately be noted that this is not the case throughout the Arab World. However, I would like to suggest that, if we can maintain that all educated native-speakers of Arabic (the proverbial ILR Level 5) are native speakers of a dialect and also--primarily through the educational process--of a standard (written) language, then it seems to be the case that educational priorities and local custom dictate that in some areas of the Arab World the standard language is regarded as a natural vehicle for oral communication alongside the colloquial dialect, whereas in others (in Egypt, for example) it clearly is not. There is a certain sense here in which one can talk about the political and cultural "power" of a particular dialect and the country in which it is spoken. In this regard

Egyptians have long regarded their homeland as not only the geographical but also political center of the Arab World, and, at certain times within more recent history, that certainly would seem to have been the case. That self-view seems also to have been reflected in their attitude towards the uses of their own colloquial(s) in such international media as the drama, for example, and in their tendency not to use the standard language in situations in which other Arab nations would require its use as a matter of custom and policy. These, then, are my thoughts and even perceptions on the complex subject as it pertains to guidelines; I should add that they do reflect a large number of debates and discussions in which I have been involved at ACTFL tester workshops and elsewhere over the past few years. If they are in any way accurate (and I suspect that a great deal of applied linguistic research is still needed in order to provide the evidence we need), I believe that it is possible to gauge some of the difficulties faced by would-be revisers of the Arabic guidelines. In order to set forth a discussion document, let me now cite the background narrative which I have composed as a possible preamble to a new set of guidelines:

> The Arabic-speaker of today will be a citizen of one particular nation (such as Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Tunis, etc.). Within that particular geographical area there will be a number of different dialects (as is the case with any such region). But that speaker is also a member of the Arab World community, and as such, he/she belongs to an Arabic-speaking world which, in the ringing phrase of Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, stretches from "The Atlantic Ocean to the Arab Gulf." If we include some of the Islamic nations in which Arabic is also understood and sometimes spoken (such as Nigeria), then the area becomes even larger. It should surprise no one that over such a vast area, there are wide divergences in language usage.

> Readers and writers of Arabic throughout the Arab World will all communicate through a language which is generally known in English today as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). It is the language of modern newsprint, literature and general communication in written form; Arabs will normally correspond with each other in this language. Even though the processes of gradual development and, more recently, the introduction of neologisms from Western sources may have brought about changes in the grammar and lexicon of the language, Modern Standard Arabic is very much the modern descendant of <u>al-lugha al-'arabiyya al-fusha</u>, the language of the Qur'an and the great corpus of classical Arabic letters. While a certain amount of poetry and a good deal of drama is written and published in one or other colloquial dialect, the overwhelming percentage of written materials in Arabic today appear in MSA. In turning to the speaking and listening skills, the situation becomes more complex. Every educated native speaker of Arabic can operate from a number of points along a spectrum, the two poles of which are MSA on the one hand and his/her own colloquial dialect on the other. Between these two (essentially theoretical) poles the educated native speaker can adjust the register of his/her language in accordance with the situation involved. The circumstances in which this "tailoring" of language will occur will differ from one area of the Arab World to another. For example, the colloquial dialect of Cairo is used by Egyptians in almost all circumstances of their daily lives, on both formal and informal occasions. In Saudi Arabia and the Gulf on the other hand, the colloquial dialect will be used in the home and other informal occasions, but MSA is normally preferred in meetings and formal situations. Furthermore, when Arabs from different dialect areas or educational backgrounds communicate with each other, a process takes place through which the conversants try to find the most convenient register of language to use so as to achieve mutual comprehension. This process will involve any one of a number of intermediate languages produced as a result of the "code-switching" involved.

In the remainder of this preamble from which I have just quoted I go on to discuss the implications of this statement for the guidelines. I will turn to that later in this presentation. Let me now consider the second aspect of this commentary, namely the pedagogical situation.

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(B) <u>Pedagogy and Arabic.</u>

The pedagogical aspect is, of course, the one which many of those who are opposed to the very notion of proficiency are now discussing in some detail (see, for example, the thoughts of Claire Kramsch at the 1986 Northeast Conference reprinted in the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages <u>Newsletter</u> 21 [Feb. 1987], 7, 45-49). I do not intend to go into detail here, but rather to consider the ways in which Arabic has been and is being taught in the light of the proficiency situation just described.

Historically speaking the study of Arabic in the Western world was part of a larger field of scholarly inquiry connected with the interpretation of the Bible and the ancillary discipline of Semitic studies. Within this philological discipline, it goes without saying that the grammar-translation approach triumphed. While there remain certain institutions where this emphasis and approach still prevails, the NDEA Act in the post-Sputnik era brought about wholesale changes in the way Arabic was taught in the U.S. Courses began to be offered which placed the study of the language into the context of the contemporary Middle East, and American Universities began to hire native-speaker Arabists in order to teach one or more of the colloquial dialects alongside the standard written language. The Title VI Act was a great stimulus to a modern approach to the study of the Middle East. In the realm of language teaching, that implied emphasis on Modern Standard Arabic for reading purposes and one of the colloquials (with an overwhelming emphasis on Cairene for a number of reasons) with regard to the oral skills. Many, if not most, Title VI Centers have been offering courses in one or more colloquial dialect alongside courses in the standard written language, but I believe that it is fair to say that, even at those institutions which are the most committed to the inclusion of the study of a colloquial dialect within their degree programs (and I must admit that my own is certainly NOT one of them), the courses in the colloquial dialects have taken a somewhat secondary position to those covering the standard written language. Furthermore, few, if any, institutions have been able to offer a full sequence of courses in a colloquial dialect. In this regard most have chosen to take advantage of the excellent Center for Arabic Studies Abroad (CASA) program run by a consortium of American universities at the American University in Cairo, offering elementary-level courses beforehand but rather little following the students' return to the U.S. A corollary of this situation, incidentally, is that there are a large number of academic Arabists in the United States who have participated in the Cairo program and have a usable knowledge of the colloquial of the area. Knowledge of other dialects among this generation of Arabists is considerably less.

During the period from the late 1950s until the end of the '70s, several textbooks were written for Arabic, both Modern Standard and the colloquial dialects. With regard to Modern Standard Arabic, almost all of them had as their aim to introduce students to the modern Arab World, thus breaking away from the Arabian Nights atmosphere conjured up by the Reverend Thatcher's grammar (used by this writer as incipient Arabist in 1961) in sentences such as "The Sheikh's daughter has flashing eyes." Somewhat of a culmination of this process was the publication of <u>Elementary Modern Standard Arabic</u> and later <u>Intermediate Modern Standard Arabic</u>, both of which have succeeded within the context of an achievement-based syllabus in producing a new generation of American Arabists considerably more familiar with the language of the modern Arab World than their forebears.

My purpose in introducing yet more history into this discussion has been to provide a perspective within which to view the current situation. Some purists may object to the introduction of pedagogy at all, but I would like to suggest that, while teaching for proficiency allows us to indulge in some truly delightful theorizing, the basic aim of the exercise is to help students learn foreign languages. It is in the interface between the theory of proficiency and the practice (and precedent) of teaching Arabic that some of the key issues seem to me to reside. Furthermore, some of my fellow Arabists will, I am sure, disagree with my perceptions here, or rather with the relative weight which I give to different aspects of Arabic teaching. In the context of this presentation, however, I hope it is reasonably clear that my aim is not in any way to criticize what has happened in the past but rather to highlight past and present emphases in the context of a discussion of changes which the concept of proficiency may make necessary.

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Let me now turn to a consideration of the guidelines for Modern Standard Arabic as they are at the moment: what they represent and do not represent, and what may be some of the considerations governing the process of rewriting them.

The Arabic Guidelines: The Present

I hope it is reasonably clear from the above comments that the present set of guidelines prepared for Arabic does not describe a language of which there are any "native-speakers" in the sense understood within the context of many other languages represented within the ACTFL Proficiency "movement." The language register utilized for the purposes of the guidelines is the only standard language of the entire Arab World, but it remains nevertheless a language which is acquired apart from and/or in addition to the dialect of the speaker as acquired and used in the home environment. That there is an identifiable movement in certain countries of the region towards this language register as a normal and natural means of communication is clear; what is equally certain is that in other parts of the region no such sentiment is discernable.

It therefore goes without saying that the preparation of a set of guidelines for "Arabic" which may describe a set of language activities moving towards those of an "educated native-speaker" is a difficult task. The difficulty of the task is exacerbated by the fact that little or no research has been done on the nature of that theoretical native-speaker and also by the fact that the attitudes of those who might be designated by that title differ widely from one region to another.

The current set of guidelines are thus intended as an interim measure. The comments which now follow about their applicability should be considered in that light. Furthermore, it should be noted that, as is the case with other languages, the major emphasis thus far has been on testing, and of a single skill at that: speaking (and to a lesser degree, listening) through the administration of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). At the University of Pennsylvania we have also prepared a separate Listening comprehension test as an experimental instrument. Issues connected with both processes will now be described.

(1) Speaking: The Oral proficiency Interview in Arabic.

One of the first questions which arises in this context is the register of language used in the interview. In view of the situation described above, this might seem a complicated matter, but my own policy has been to take the theory of proficiency at its word. In the Arab world itself participants in conversation who do not know each other (particularly when they come from different social and/or educational backgrounds and from different areas of the Arabic-speaking world) will spend some time in an almost unconscious process of discovering a register with which they feel comfortable. Listening to the radio or television can provide the clearest evidence of this, but my own example comes from my participation in a Festival of Creativity in Cairo in 1984 when, after delivering a paper in standard Arabic, I was asked a question in Moroccan dialect. I hardly caught a single word and turned in despair to the Egyptian chairman of the session. He had not understood either! The questioner rephrased his question in standard Arabic, and everyone, not least myself, heaved a sigh of relief! Transferring this to the interview situation, it seems to me that, when the language involved is Arabic, among other things that may be achieved during the warm-up phase is that the interviewer and interviewee will discover what register(s) of language will enable communication to occur between them. Those registers do not have to be the same, but they do have to be mutually comprehensible. At ACTFL workshops I have listened to a large number of interviews in which a differing registers have been used (or attempted), including, for example, one in which the interviewee responded in fluent Cairene colloquial to questions posed in equally fluent modern standard. A corollary of that is, of course, that the colloquial-speaking interviewee was fully able to comprehend Modern Standard Arabic and switch to colloquial, and vice versa with the interviewer. In other words, the oral proficiency interview can and must replicate the communication strategies found in the Arab world itself, with its

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almost infinite number of registers along the spectrum, the (almost Platonic) poles of which are standard Arabic and the colloquials.

Another issue which has arisen in connection with the OPI has been the stage at which it may be desirable to test candidates as "incipient educated native-speakers," in other words users of the language who are able to switch from one register to another (a register of standard to a colloquial register or vice versa). The highest level on the ACTFL scale is termed Superior which is the exact equivalent of the governmental language schools' (ILR) level 3. Above that are levels 4 and 5 on the ILR scale. Level 4 has as one of its criteria the ability to "tailor" language use according to circumstances. Thus we might suggest that students of Arabic at the highest levels of the ACTFL scale should be expected to function to some degree in two registers of Arabic and to switch between them according to social context. That, of course, implies that the study of a colloquial dialect will have been begun before that point. The precise level at which an incipient knowledge of a colloquial should be encouraged by the guidelines is something which the Arabic teaching profession will need to discuss.

The administration of the OPI has, needless to say, served to demonstrate almost immediately the unsuitability of almost all current textbooks for proficiency based instruction and testing. While admitting, as many practitioners are now doing, that the distinction between the levels Novice-Low and Novice-Mid are of minimal value and significance, the fact remains that the connection between "memorized material" currently available to learners of Arabic from textbooks and the native-speaking environment is almost nil. Our new syllabus, Let's Learn Arabic, attempts to address this problem, by moving from the phoneme/grapheme level to the word through the introduction of common greetings and form-filling. The long acknowledged inadequacy (in fact, in most cases, unavailability) of syllabi for the more advanced levels now becomes a major gap in our ability to train students in the ever-expanding skills necessary for the higher levels of the scale. At the University of Pennsylvania have chosen to start by composing a beginners' syllabus (for the first 240 hours or so), but proficiency-based materials are urgently needed at all levels.

(2) Listening

Let me turn briefly to consider the listening skill, not so much from the point of view of student performance but rather of the most effective ways of obtaining a ratable sample. The question as to whether one tests the listening skill separately, or simply incorporates an evaluation within the context of the OPI, is another area where one can debate the issues involved at some length. For example, the Bennett-Biersteker model of proficiency (for which see Patrick Bennett & Ann Biersteker, Proficiency Profiling: An Introduction to the Model, Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1986) seeks to test the "Input-Output Mode" during the course of an interview. Our own preliminary experiments with a proficiency-based listening comprehension test at the University of Pennsylvania suggest to us that there is a need (at least at the early stages in the acquisition process) for the instructor to have a separate instrument for testing the listening skill alone. We would stress however that widely divergent results may be obtained in accordance with the mode of testing selected. For example, the test which we have developed at the University of Pennsylvania comes in three formats. It should be clearly emphasized that the three versions were chosen to reflect and test not only the different suppositions regarding the testing of the listening skill, but also some of the problems most frequently mentioned:

(1) --The passages are read in Arabic on tape;
    --the "options" are also read in Arabic on tape;
    --the student responds by circling alif, baa' or jiim.

(2) --The passages are read in Arabic on tape;
    --the "options" are available in printed form in Arabic;
    --the student responds by circling alif, baa' or jiim.

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(3) --The passages are read in Arabic on tape;
    --the "options" are available in printed form in English;
    --the student responds by circling *alif, baa'* or *jiim*.

The first of these procedures is obviously the only real test of listening comprehension, but there is a considerable problem of memory involved; but one might well ask whether the development of a "memory" is not itself an intrinsic part of the listening comprehension skill, particularly in the more advanced stages where, besides the ability to participate in discussion and conversation, students may wish to develop a skill in interpreting, whether simultaneous or consecutive. While that obviously involves a very high level of skill in the language, the training towards it at an earlier stage certainly requires the development of memory retention. The second and third methods both invoke the reading skill. In many cases both of them allow the well-versed "test-taker" to predict in a generally effective way what the environment and often the focus of the passage is to be before it is read out on the tape. While the second method keeps the student in the environment of Arabic, the third separates the reading process from that of listening entirely by printing the options in English.

It will not surprise teachers, I am sure, to learn that our initial experiments show that students perform much better on the third method than on the second; and that they perform considerably better on both than on the first. All this may suggest that a taped listening-comprehension/multiple-choice response test is not a very effective or validatable mode of testing the listening skill. While we intend to continue using the test which we currently have available in order to explore these issues further, we would suggest that instructors might wish to experiment with having students listen to a live conversation between two "native-speakers" and then write a precis in English of what they heard. Alternatively they might be asked to respond to a series of specific questions based on a pre-recorded passage.

The above two sections have been concerned with testing the oral skills, thus reflecting the fact that, while research projects are currently under way, the requirements of the governmental language schools and the experience which they have had in teaching and testing the oral skills provides a lengthy head start for those skills as they receive greater emphasis in the academic sector. Arabic shares with all other languages involved in this large educational experiment the need for further research on the implications of proficiency for the teaching and testing of the reading and writing skills.

The Arabic Guidelines: The Future

The comments that I have made above have already identified a number of issues and problem areas which need to be addressed by the profession. I might also add that, in the context of discussion of the guidelines project, the case of Arabic brings into the open certain basic points which have already been identified by those who are opposed to the notion of "proficiency" as a guiding principle in academic language-teaching programs. Thus, in this final section I will pose some questions which the Arabic teaching profession may wish to face, clearly acknowledging as I do so that the context within which I pose them is a broader one.

(1) How are we to define an "educated native-speaker" of Arabic, that construct towards which any set of guidelines for Arabic is presumed to be aimed?

I hope that my comments above have shown that, to a degree not found with most of the languages with which the Guidelines project has been occupied, this is an almost unanswerable question. Any attempt to answer it within the framework of today's Arabic-speaking World will bring with it a whole baggage of attitudes and biases, national, cultural and religious. While we await the results of the large amount of applied-linguistic research which is needed if we are to attempt an answer to this question as it affects the composition of guidelines, we might subdivide it along the following lines:

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(2) What are the parameters governing the use of different "registers" of Arabic and when are they used?

(3) How far should the Arabic Guidelines reflect: (a) the "realities" of the Arab World; (b) the cultural politics of the region;(c) the aspirations of native-speakers in the different regions?

Within this framework what is particularly needed by way of research is an analysis of the way(s) in which register-shifting occurs when native-speakers of Arabic communicate. While preliminary research using such media as television has been most instructive in this regard, we need to analyze many more types of situation.

Another group of questions takes us out of the heady realm of proficiency as theory into the practical area of pedagogy and curriculum. Here a very central and direct question can be asked:

(4) Do academic Arabic programs wish to retain their (sometimes implied, sometimes explicit) current goals of treating the standard language as the primary goal, with one or more dialects of the colloquial as a secondary one?

I realize, of course, that a few institutions give perhaps equal emph⁻ ⁻s to both registers of Arabic, but they are clearly the exception. The majority of institutions offering Arabic in this country will teach Modern Standard Arabic in their beginning course. As noted above, this is an exact reversal of the situation in the Arabic-speaking world itself where the child will learn his own dialect in the home and "acquire" the standard language in school or (in some cases) via programming on the media. An alternative question that follows from this can be posed as follows:

(5a) Do we wish to employ the guidelines project as a means of changing radically the curricular priorities of Arabic-teaching programs in the U.S. by suggesting that we should be replicating the sequence of the "educated native-speaker"?

OR

(5b) Do we wish to retain the emphasis on Standard Arabic that does NOT replicate the native-speaker situation but does bring with it some advantages:

(i) it allows for the development of all four skills
within a single course environment;

(ii) it reflects the goals of certain sectors of the
native speaking community itself (although
clearly NOT Egypt, the nation with which most
American Arabists have had the most contact).

In this context another issue which may be of some relevance is:

(6) In establishing language priorities for Arabic guidelines, what is the effect, if any, of the fact that the vast majority of Western learners of the language are studying it at the collegiate level and not before (as is the case with many other languages represented within the guidelines project)? We might editorialize briefly here by referring to the rather distressing data about language proficiencies produced by Richard Lambert in his report Beyond Growth. It is true that the NDEA ACT Title VI has helped to train large numbers of graduate students in the United States, but the pressures of "learning a language" as part of a graduate degree program have almost guaranteed that

the retention rate among this large cohort is relatively minimal. Here, of course, I am entering the realm of national language policy. However it seems foolish to ignore the fact that the majority of educated Americans who have learned Arabic have done so with funding provided under that act. Both national language policy per se and the relationship between that set of goals and those of academe (insofar as they may be different) are of clear relevance to our discussion and to decisions which will have to be made.

Conclusion

Let me finish this presentation by reiterating that my own interest and participation in this entire process was the result of a very local decision on my part which has expanded into a broader domain. That the current set of guidelines, written for standard Arabic alone, will not suffice for the profession of Arabic teachers as a whole is obvious. I have tried in the above comments to express SOME of the issues and options which seem to me to present themselves as possibilities. There are obviously others. I now look forward to participating in further discussions of the issues involved so that the new set of guidelines will represent a document which can serve the needs of instructors of Arabic in a wide variety of programs.

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The Application of the ILR-ACTFL Test and Guidelines to Indonesian

The problems of applying ACTFL proficiency guidelines to Indonesian are considered here by John Wolff, professor of Indonesian and Philippine linguistics at Cornell University, who was asked to write this article for the project.

In this article, Wolff considers the sociolinguistic aspect of guidelines, and the problem of low numbers of students studying Indonesian in the United States.

THE APPLICATION OF THE ILR-ACTFL TEST
AND GUIDELINES TO INDONESIAN

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Indonesia is the fifth most populous nation in the world. With more than 165 million inhabitants it is next behind the United States in population and far ahead of France, Japan, Germany, and Italy, just to name a few of the countries whose languages are most widely studied by students in Indonesia. Indonesia is important to the United States economically, militarily, diplomatically and (I would insist) culturally, as well; yet the total enrollment in Indonesian is ludicrously small, amounting to less than 100 in any single academic year. Indonesian is the official language of a country, where neither English nor any other widely-known Western language is spoken by any significant portion of the population. There are good pedagogical materials available for Indonesian, the traditions for teaching Indonesian are positive, and the language does not offer horrendous difficulties to the learner. In short, there is every reason for the study of Indonesian to increase in this country, and there is every reason to encourage enrollment. For this reason, it is not amiss to discuss the proficiency-testing movement in relation to Indonesian instruction and testing.

By Proficiency Testing we mean the oral interview that was developed in the US government services and has since been applied to second-language testing outside of the government, especially in institutions of higher learning in this country, and whose purpose is was to determine the testee's ability to handle oral communication.*

*In recent years, tests of ability in listening, writing, and reading by similar methods have been developed for some of the major languages, but we will not be discussing this kind of testing in this paper.

The interview is open ended conversation in which the examiner
determines the proficiency of the person being tested by means of
a series of questions or statements to which the testee must react, or
by means of requests to perform certain tasks in the language being
tested. The testee is given a rating ranging from novice through
intermediate, advanced, and superior, with pluses and minuses to
clarify the testee's proficiency more precisely. In rather loose
terms, novice refers to a student at the level of one who can do little
with the language and whose repetoire is confined to recitation of
individual vocabulary items; one who is at the intermediate level has
some of the basic structural features but certainly not much control;
one at the advanced level has much of the structure and good control
(especially at the advanced plus level); whereas one at the superior
level is a person who has worked for years on the language and is able
to manipulate its expressive capabilities on a variety of subjects and
express himself or herself with ease and accuracy with few structural
errors. Since language learners show comparable characteristics in
their handling of the second language at various levels of proficiency
from language to language, it has been possible to develop generic
guidelines that state the characteristics of learners at each level and
that are valid for all languages. These generic guidelines are then
made more precise by language specific guidelines, which outline in
some detail what types of behavior characterize learners of the
specific language at each level, discussed in terms of specific
grammatical forms, constructions, or other features that are important
for the language concerned. It is these specific guidelines that

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enable different examiners at differe ; times and with different

populations to give consistent and accurate ratings.

These language-specific guidelines have been developed for the

major Western languages, and for the non-Western languages guidelines

have been developed (or have been worked on for some years now) for

Chinese and Japanese. For a rarely taught language such as Indonesian,

it would be well if such guidelines were developed for three reasons.

First, Indonesian is an important language for the reasons mentioned in

the opening of this paper, and although enrollment is miniscule, a very

high portion of the students of Indonesian choose careers in which a

knowledge of Indonesian is an absolute requisite. Thus, it is crucial

that teachers of Indonesian be able to assess what is being learned in

the classroom. Second, it is necessary to ascertain a student's

proficiency to determine qualification for admittance to study programs

in Indonesia and an applicant's suitability at the career level for

employment in a field in which a knowledge of Indonesian is vital.

Finally, there is a reas¯n that is applicable to all foreign-language

teaching: testing of oral proficiency has had a salubrious effect on

the language teaching profession in those institu: ons where

proficiency testing has been adopted seriously. Here expectations of

student performance are based on a model of the ability to function in

the speech community. Since what is tested is not mastery of a set of

lexical items or grammatical patterns but the ability to perform, the

teachers are led to adopt classroom procedures which consist of

exercises in communicative behavior rather than exercises in

understanding of grammatical forms. Few who have undergone training in

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proficiency testing and who have mastered the guidelines have failed to gain rich insights into what language teaching should aim for and how one might achieve this aim.

In short, there is every reason to develop guidelines for proficiency testing in Indonesian. We are, however, still in the very early stages of developing such guidelines, and there is a great deal of spadework that remains to be done before valid guidelines for Indonesian can come into existence. One piece of spadework needs to be done with the generic guidelines to make them more generally applicable. The other spadework is in Indonesian itself. First, let us talk briefly on what must be done with the generic guidelines. Although Indonesian has no unique features that resist measurement by a metric common to Western languages, Indonesian grammar revolves around very different principles, and generic guidelines must avoid presupposing any of the specific principles that characterize Western languages. However, generic guidelines that are expressed in terms of behavioral patterns do hold. That is, generic guidelines are applicable to all languages if they are stated in terms of control of the discourse structure such that the interlocutor is able to understand sequencing and identities of the various subjects or objects of the actions, or if they are stated in terms of control of communicative strategies so that the interlocutor can follow the speech act being engaged in and the person tested can follow the speech acts of the examiner. In short, for all languages part of proficiency testing is ascertaining the ability of the student to function within the parameters of the speech event in which he or she is engaging, and

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guidelines that refer to this goal of testing are applicable
everywhere.

Let me now go back to the subject of spadework that must be done
in developing guidelines specifically for the testing of Indonesian.
For Indonesian, problems of developing guidelines must be attacked on
two fronts. First, one must determine of which features of grammar,
lexicon, and organization at the sentence and larger level are typical
of speaker ability at each stage of proficiency. Second, one must
determine of the testee's ability to make use of the stylistic
resources by which Indonesian enables the members of the community to
function in accordance with the ethics that underlie peculiar
Indonesian cultural institutions. The student of Indonesian has the
task of learning not only on the plane of grammar, lexicon, semantics,
and functional sentence perspective, but also on the plane of style,
register, and sociolinguistic rules if he is to function in the
Indonesian speech community. Proficiency testing in Indonesian must
address both planes.

Before we go ahead, it would be well to make a few remarks on the
importance of sociolinguistic rules for Indonesian. Here the
expectations of the members of the speech community are at variance
with behavior that is normally within the ken of the Western student,
and on the Indonesians' part there is not a great deal of understanding
or tolerance for deviance from expected behavior. Whereas a linguistic
faux pas may be the cause of amusement or discomfort in Europe, in
Indonesia it can be the cause of serious tensions. Unfortunately,
Indonesian is one of those languages in which almost every time one

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opens one's mouth, a strong statement is made about human relations,

social status, and the kind of person everyone involved in the

conversation is. Indonesian is heavily dominated by Javanese culture,

which revolves around human relations, and the Javanese ethnology of

communication or method of interaction has become the national norm.

In short Javanese, and thus Indonesian, by virtue of being dominated by

Javanese, demonstrates clear notions of how society should be ordered

and accordingly has created an ethic that is enforced by strict

adherence to sociolinguistic rules. Although the total complexity and

richness of the Javanese repertoire does not spill over into

Indonesian, the latter does exhibit enough complexity to make

unequivocal statements about human relations and to put these rules for

interaction into effect. These features include terms of address and

reference, and demands for a certain amount of indirectness,

circumlocution and reference by inference. Failure to adhere to the

rules of indirectness and circumlocution also makes a statement of

social identity. Thus, these rules are part and parcel of elementary

Indonesian language instruction, as much as morphology, syntax,

lexicon, and the semantic system of sentence perspective. These rules

must have a place in testing, and a set of guidelines that enables

examiners to test students in a way that is consistent and accurate

must make specific statements of how control of these sociolinguistic

rules is manifested at various stages or proficiency levels.

In developing proficiency guidelines for Indonesian, the first

step the community of specialists in the teaching of Indonesian must

take is to gain skills in testing a western language for which there is

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a tradition of testing and for which there are fairly effective

guidelines in existence. On the basis of this training and skills

derived therefrom, Indonesian teachers can prepare themselves to

interview students for whose proficency level one has a fairly good

intuitive level. These interviews should be conducted with students at

all levels and the interviews should be transcribed. The purpose of

these trial interviews is two-fold: (1) develop a set of testing

routines which is applicable to the peculiar Indonesian cultural

setting and can elicit the routines which demonstrate a mastery of

sociolinguistic routines; (2) provide data on the features which

typically mark the speech of students at each level. On the basis of

those interviews (and there will necessarily be many dozens) a set of

preliminary guidelines can be developed. These will have to be

distributed throughout the community of specialists in Indonesian

pedagogy who will then apply and refine them.

It seems almost quixotic to propose such elaborate and complex

processes for proficiency guidelines in a language so rarely studied,

and for which there is no large cadre of teachers who could be taught

to administer a proficiency interview. However, I would submit that

even though proficiency testing for students in Indonesian around the

country is not a practical goal, guidelines specific to Indonesian are

nevertheless needed in order to prepare a test that can be practically

administered throughout the country. Any such test would probably have

to be pre-recorded with questions worked out in advance. It is

possible to prepare a pre-recorded test that approximates or replicates

a proficiency interview only if it is based on experience with a

proficiency interview. In short, the proficiency guidelines must be

developed as a step in the process of developing a pre-recorded test

which aims to replicate or approximate the oral interview. Thus, even

though we do not foresee extensive testing with proficiency interviews

for Indonesian, the guidelines and training that will enable Indonesian

language specialists in this country to conduct proficiency interviews

must be developed as a preliminary to developing a pre-recorded

"proficiency mode" test which can be administered to the widely

scattered population of students in Indonesian in various institutions

in this country.

Some Preliminary Thoughts About Proficiency Guidelines in Hindi

In this article on establishing proficiency guidelines in Hindi, Gambhir considers the difficulty in writing guidelines that take code-switching into account. She notes that the rules of code-switching associated with each level mudt be identified.

Vijay Gambhir, an associate professor in the Department of South Asia Studies, University of Pennsylvania, w~ ~ asked to write this article for the project.

SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ABOUT PROFICIENCY
GUIDELINES IN HINDI

By Vijay Gambhir
University of Pennsylvania

In order to identify stages of proficiency in a foreign language for different modalities the generic proficiency guidelines were first created in 1982 and were later revised in 1986 by ACTFL. The revised guidelines are applicable to more languages because of fewer, more general statements about the accuracy component of the trisection. The generic guidelines are applicable to commonly taught European languages as well as to less commonly taught non-European languages, such as Chinese and Japanese, which differ from the former in their grammatical representations of various semantic categories, particularly in present, past, and future time.

The generic guidelines need to be supplemented with language-specific level descriptions for language-specific examples and statements about the three components of the trisection - function, context/content, and accuracy - for fine-tuning of proficiency rating. The language-specific guidelines should follow the pattern of generic guidelines in order to evaluate students in measures that are comparable across languages, but at the same time take into account the specifics of a particular language. There are language-specific functions as well as content areas. Most language-specific statements, however, are expected in the accuracy component in the form of statements about the control of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and sociolinguistic factors. Below is an example of Intermediate-Low level speaking descriptions in the current guidelines and an expanded version of it with illustrations in the German guidelines.

Generic descriptions (Intermediate-Low):

"Able to handle successfully a limited number of interactive, task-oriented and social situations. Can ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements and maintain face-to-face conversation, although in a highly restricted manner and with much linguistic inaccuracy. Within these limitations, can perform such tasks as introducing self, ordering a meal, asking directions, and making purchases. Vocabulary is adequate to express only the most elementary needs. Strong interference from native language may occur. Misunderstandings frequently arise, but with repetition, the intermediate low speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors."

German descriptions (Intermediate-Low):

"Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or in very familiar topics, can ask and answer questions and respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions; vocabulary is adequate to talk simply about learning the target language and other academic studies. For example: *Wieviel kostet das? Wo ist der Bahnhof? Ich mochte zu... Wieviel Uhr ist es? Ich leme hier Deutsch; Ich studiere schon 2 jahre; Ich habe eine Wohnug.* Awareness of gender apparent (many mistakes). Word order is random. Verbs are generally in the present tense. Some correct use of predicate adjectives and personal pronouns (*ich, wir*). No clear distinction made between polite and familiar address forms (*Sie, du*). Awareness of case system sketchy. Frequent errors in all structures. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact

wit'n foreigners attempting to speak German. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers."

Today, language-specific proficiency guidelines are available for several European and non-European languages including French, German, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, and Arabic. The goal of the present paper is not to state proficiency guidelines for Hindi but to direct our thinking in that direction by discussing some important factors that must be taken into consideration for developing a set of proficiency guidelines for different modalities in Hindi. It is hoped that most of the issues discussed here for Hindi would be useful in the creation of guidelines for other South Asian languages also.

The proficiency guidelines of a language state level descriptions ranging from 'novice' level, i.e., no functional ability in the language to 'superior' level, i.e., functional ability equivalent to that of an educated native speaker of the target language. For various proficiency level descriptions the communicative power, style and accuracy of an educated native speaker is the reference point. The concept of an educated native speaker of Hindi is different from that of other languages, such as English or Chinese. Therefore before creating guidelines for Hindi, it is desirable to look into the concept of an educated native speaker in the Hindi speech community.

In general, most native speakers are considered to be able to attain the status of an educated native speaker in their respective languages after spending about twenty to twenty-five years of formal education through the medium of their native language in a wide variety of settings offered by home and school. Educated native speakers through their long term familiarization with varying kinds of language are thus able to handle everyday and formal situations and in a wide variety of content areas, ranging from every day survival situations to formal and abstract professional topics with varying social groups in a speech community (Lowe,1985).

The general concept of an educated native speaker, as described in the preceding paragraph fits well in the context of monolingual societies, such as in Japan or in the United States. It also fits in those bilingual or multilingual societies where there is only one dominant language, such as in Russia or China. The single dominant language in such speech communities is used in all, or in a variety of contexts at home, work, and school in informal as well as formal settings. In a multilingual society like India, which has 15 major languages and several hundred dialects, the concept of an educated native speaker is, however, somewhat different. Because of the use of different languages in different sociolinguistic settings and in different content areas, native speakers are able to attain only a restricted proficiency in their native languages. For example, an educated native speaker of Hindi, while living in Tamilnadu, may use Hindi at home with his family members, Tamil in streets for everyday shopping, etc., English for office work, and Sanskrit in a temple for religious prayers and services. Thus a Hindi speaker who lives in a non-Hindi state may very well never be able to attain Hindi proficiency in areas other than his home.

One might, however, expect an educated native speaker of Hindi living in the Hindi speaking areas to be fully proficient in all areas of language use. But the truth of the matter is that there too, the speakers are able to attain only a limited proficiency in Hindi because of the dominant presence of English. For instance, an engineer, or a diplomat, living in Delhi or Agra would most likely use Hindi at home, in the street, with friends, and with colleagues at work in informal settings but as far as his use of language for professional use in formal settings is concerned, English has the highest probability of being used. In other words, the use of Hindi for its educated native speakers is mainly for social and pragmatic reasons and minimally for professional reasons.

One of the primary reasons that most educated native speakers of Hindi use English in formal and professional domains is that English is the language of higher education in India. It is at higher levels of education that native speakers develop their formal and professional styles in their languages. Most educated native speakers of Hindi are thus deprived of the opportunity to develop their formal and professional styles of Hindi in their college and university years. A few educated native speakers are, however, able to develop their Hindi proficiency in higher language domains either because of their love for the language or because their job demands a high proficiency. Such jobs include writers,

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announcers for Hindi radio and television programs, and editors and writers for Hindi newspapers and magazines.

Today most modern subjects in recognized Indian educational institutions in the areas of science and technology, such as physics, nuclear science, chemistry, botany, mathematics, medicine, economics, and commerce are taught and learned through English. English is the language of educated people and the elites in India. Knowledge of English has almost become synonymous with education in many areas. The use of Hindi in higher learning is mainly limited to areas pertaining to language, literature and culture.

Today in India, for most high paying jobs which also happen to be "high tech" jobs, the knowledge of English is imperative. Most parents prefer to send their children to English medium schools, where all subjects except Hindi language and literature are taught in English. English, being the language of higher education and the link language for elites in the country, is considered prestigious. Hindi, on the other hand, is the link language of less educated in most of India. It is a language for informal socialization and entertainment, like watching Hindi movies and listening to or singing Hindi songs.

Another reason for the restricted domains of Hindi use for its educated native speakers is the constitutional status of English in India. According to the Indian constitution, English is the co-official language of India and will enjoy that status until all states unanimously accept Hindi as the official language of the country. Even today, most government work at the inter-state and national levels is done in English. Exemplifying the dominance of English, most government documents are prepared first in English and are then translated into Hindi.

Thus because of the widespread use of English in government offices, colleges, and universities, most educated native speakers of Hindi do not get an opportunity to develop their formal higher level linguistic skills in Hindi, such as diplomatic negotiations, supporting one's opinion with arguments in professional or in other formal domains of language use. This limited ability in the use of Hindi by its educated native speakers must reflect in any Hindi proficiency guidelines since all non-native performances are measured with a yardstick of communicative competence of an educated native speaker in the same situation. In other words, we include only those functions in Hindi proficiency guidelines that are achieved by most educated native speakers at different levels of proficiency.

Another point that needs to be considered for developing Hindi proficiency guidelines is the complexity of the communicative system controlled by an educated native speaker. An educated native speaker of Hindi has two codes or styles. One is the spoken code which is used in informal speech and writing, such as personal letters and notes, and the other is written code which is used in formal speech and writing, such as articles, books, and documents. The spoken code has many words of English and Persio-Arabic origin. The written code, on the other hand, is loaded with words from Sanskrit, or words derived from Sanskrit roots. The use of the appropriate code is important in Hindi, as its inappropriate use can lead to sociolinguistically unacceptable utterances that may be awkward or even humorous at times. The following examples are awkward because of the use of inappropriate code. Here spoken code is being used in situations that require the use of written code.

(1) A public address:

bhaaio aur bahnoN, you all know ki desh caar saal pahle kahaaN thaa aur aaj kahaaN hai.
'Brothers and Sisters! You all know where the country was four years ago and where it is today.'

(2) A news broadcast:

aaj morning meN India aur paakistaan ke foreign
ministers ne ek prastaav par sign kiye aur donoN
netaaoN ne kahaa ki future meN donoN nations meN
business pahle se zyaadaa hogaa.

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'This morning, India's and Pakistan's foreign
minister signed a proposal and both leaders said
that in future there would be more business
between the two nations.'

(In these and the subsequent examples, italics are used for Hindi, and standard letters are used for English).

Examples (3) and (4) are inappropriate because written code is being used in situations that require the use of spoken code.

(3) A mother telling her daughter:

jaao bhaiyaa ke kapol par cumban karo.
'Go and kiss your brother's cheek.'

(4) A patient talking to a doctor:

*mujhe ati tiivr jvar hai aur tan meN asahya
vednaa hai.*
'I have a very high fever and unbearable pain in
my body.'

The above examples (1) - (4) are grammatical in Hindi but they are inappropriate because of the use of wrong code. So from an evaluative point of view, any breach in the use of code will reflect on the proficiency level of Hindi learners. In the spoken code, mixing of English in the speech of an educated native speaker of Hindi is found mostly at word level but sometimes it goes up to phrase or even sentence level in a discourse. See examples (5) - (10).

(5) *tumhaara* idea *acchaa h*.
'Your idea is good.'

(6) *vo baRaa* intelligent *hai.*
'He is very intelligent.'

(7) *ciiz to Thiik hai lekin* the price is horrible.
'The thing is alright but the price is horrible.'

(8) I told you *ki vo nahiiN aayega.*
'I told you that he won't come.'

(9) *hamne kal shivaa hoTal meN khaanaa khaayaa.* The food was delicious. *mazaa aa gayaa.*
'Yesterday we ate in Shiva Hotel. The food was delicious. We really enjoyed it.'

(10) *tum jaao.* I will come later. *thoRaa kaam khatm kar luuN.*
'You go. I will come later. I want to finish some
work.'

The use of English in the spoken code is also frequent for formulaic expressions for greetings (e.g., hi, hello, good morning, bye), compliments (e.g., that's pretty, 's nice, that's lovely), and for other polite expressions (e.g., thank you, sorry).

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In the speech of an educated native speaker of Hindi, there are, however, some definite rules for Hindi-English code mixing. For instance, the article of an English noun must be dropped when used at the word level borrowing in Hindi, or else the resulting sentence will be ungrammatical. See examples (11) & (12). Also, English verbs cannot be used as simple verbs in Hindi sentences. They instead must be treated as verbal nouns or adjectives, and then Hindi verbs karnaa 'to do' or haraa 'to be' in their appropriate morphological forms are to be tagged on to them. See examples (13) & (14).

(11) *usnee bataayaa ki* result/*the result *kal niklegaa.*
'He said that the result will be out tomorrow.'

(12) *vo* bathroom/*the bathroom *meN hai.*
'He is in the bathroom.'

(13) *usne* accept *kiyaa* /* accepted.
'He accepted (it).'

(14) *vo* admit *huaa* /* admitted.
'He was admitted.'

Any violation in the rules of code mixing in the speech of foreign learners would indicate a lesser degree of proficiency in the language.

One question that one might ask in the context of code mixing is if educated native speakers of Hindi use English words or phrases even for basic items pertaining to clothing, kinship terms, salutations, etc. In their speech, then should we expect the knowledge of their Hindi equivalents from foreign learners? The answer to this question is affirmative. If foreign learners are to approximate the speech of educated native speakers of Hindi, they must know Hindi equivalents of commonly used English words or expressions because educated native speakers of Hindi control both English as well as their Hindi equivalents. The educated native speakers of Hindi use mixed code mainly in the company of Hindi-English bilinguals, and unmixed code in the company of Hindi monolinguals.

Also, it is important to know that even though the number of Hindi-English bilinguals is large in India, particularly in the cities, bilinguals form on_ ~out 2% of the total Indian population. So if foreign learners wish to interact with the Indian socoty at large, knowledge of both unmixed as well as mixed code is required. If a candidate uses many English words and expressions for everyday basic survival situations as a crutch in his speech, this will indicate his lower competence in the language. For professional and abstract topics, however, the use of English words and phrases (within the permissible rules of code-switching) in the speech of a candidate would indicate higher competence in the language, as it approximates the natural speech of an educated native speaker of Hindi. The use of appropriate code indicates grasp of sociolinguistic rules, which are indicative of superior level performance.

A closer look at the content areas of Hindi is needed before developing proficiency guidelines for it, as the details of content areas at different levels of proficiency are language-specific. The content areas of a language have a face validity from the viewpoint of language use. For Hindi, · pointed out earlier in the paper, the content areas for superior levels are mainly in the area nguage , literature, and culture. There is only restricted use of Hindi in social sciences, such as . ropolo), sociology, and economics. In the areas of science and technology such as medicine, engn.. ig, a. l compute ence, Hindi is only marginally used.

Th _ntent areas for advanced level candidates are also somewhat constrained in Hindi. Foreigners almost never need Hindi for business or work purpose. Most business at the national and international level is conducted in English in India. Also, foreigners rarely get work permits in India to engage in jobs such as a secretary, a librarian, a salesperson, a factory worker, or even a teacher. Most foreign Hindi speakers are college or university students who are majoring in literature, art, or social

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sciences. Their interest is usually in reading modern or old texts, or in talking to people for gathering data that they need in order to create, support or criticize a social science hypothesis. Maximum use of Hindi for foreigners at the advanced level is in the social area, such as introducing oneself, talking about family, inquiring well-being of others, and talking about current social happenings.

At the intermediate level in Hindi, we need to take a closer look at the informal day-to-day basic survival situations. From the viewpoint of language use, there are no generic or universal basic situations. What may be considered basic for one language may not be so for another language. For instance, for an American tourist in Russia, the use of Russian for money matters (cashing a check or getting foreign exchange, etc.), for travel needs (making a plane or a train reservation, getting hotel accommodation, ordering a meal in a restaurant, etc.), and for telephone use (seeking information for opening and closing timings of museums and stores, confirming flight time or plane reservation, etc.) will perhaps be considered a basic need in order to survive in Russia. For an American tourist in India, however, the use of Hindi for the abovementioned situations is not a basic need for the most part. Most Indians who work in these situations, not only have a working proficiency in English but the use of English is their preferred choice in the work related situations. Most of the times, as a matter of fact, their work proficiency is in English only.

In the case of Hindi, everyday basic or survival situations mostly include communication with those Hindi speakers who do not have any formal high school or college education. Such situations include taking a rickshaw, scooter, or taxi; giving laundry to a washerman; giving instructions to a cook or maid; bargaining for sidewalk shopping, etc. Strictly speaking, there are no basic situations in Indian cities where foreigners must use Hindi, if they do not wish to. In cities most of the time, even people with no formal education, such as taxi drivers, cooks, and maids learn enough basic English sentences and vocabulary to be able to conduct their business with foreigners.

In small towns and villages, however, the story is different. There are many everyday situations where a foreigner is required to use Hindi. For most of his daily needs, a foreigner needs to interact with native people who often do not know English, and even those who know a little prefer to speak in their mother tongue.

Given the widespread use of English, one may wonder why English speakers should learn Hindi at all if they are going to be only in Indian cities and can function in English. The reality is that the knowledge of English may be sufficient to survive marginally in basic situations in Indian cities, but the knowledge of Hindi gives one a communicative power that is essential to handle complex situations. For example, one may be able to use English for telling a taxi driver where one wants to go but, if a taxi driver is trying to overcharge either by going by a longer route or by playing with the meter, one can certainly achieve one's end better by communicating through taxi driver's dominant language than through English in which his proficiency is most likely limited to memorized sentences.

Further, we need to be aware of the fact that the topics that are generally discussed at personal and social level interaction are different in different societies. For instance, in the Indian society, it is common to talk about personal topics such as family, marriage, religion, and sometimes even income with short term acquaintances. In the American society, on the other hand, such topics are avoided unless one knows the person well. Most people prefer to talk about impersonal and neutral topics, such as weather, movies, sports, and shopping, when speaking with people whom they do not know well.

Though from the viewpoint of testing, the content of a test is the most variable element and can be determined in large part on the interests of the testee, in order for a test to have content validity it is important for the tester to be aware of the validity of different content areas at different levels of proficiency in the target speech community. The bulk of the questions in the test should be on a variety of topics that are relevant in the language for specific levels. Mention of relevant content areas in language-specific guidelines should help new testers in selecting their questions in culturally appropriate domains.

As mentioned before, the most language specific features are found in the accuracy component of the trisection. The generic guidelines provide broad general statements about the accuracy component in terms of utterance length, fluency, pronunciation, grammar forms, vocabulary, and comprehensibility. For language-specific purposes, the generic guidelines need to be elucidated with examples and

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statements about the important language-specific features. These may be in the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse, and sociolinguistics. The degree of command of various language-specific features is to be measured in terms of full (no patterned errors), partial (some errors), and concept (many errors) control.

The time taken to gain full control of important language-specific features depends on the complexity of the features, their frequency, and the difference between the native and the target language of the learners. Normally, full control is gained in a relatively shorter time for passive language skills, i.e., listening and reading, than for active skills, i.e., speaking and writing.

Hindi-specific guidelines, at the phonological level, should include statements about the control of pronunciation of particularly those phonological features which are significant for being understood by native speakers of Hindi. Distinction between short and long vowels, unaspirates and aspirates, dentals and retroflex as well as placement of appropriate stress and intonation is important for Hindi learners. It is particularly important, if they wish to communicate with unsympathetic Hindi speakers, i.e., with those native speakers who are not accustomed to foreigner's speech.

At the morphological level, Hindi level descriptions should include statements about the control of different regular and irregular forms of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs. In Hindi, ability to use appropriate grammatical forms is important for making number, gender, tense, and other time relation distinctions. Most, transitive, and causal verb forms are also morphologically $\checkmark$ ed in Hindi. Consistent control of basic Hindi morphology requires a long time exposure and practice.

At the syntax level, there should be statements about the control of various important sim;'e and complex structures and constructions in Hindi, such as reflexive, participial, gerund, passive, hypothetical, compound verbs, and various relative and correlative constructions. The verb agreement rule is an important rule in Hindi syntax. Patterned errors in the application of verb agreement rule should prohibit a candidate from achieving Advanced level proficiency in Hindi.

At the discour level, control of global features is important. Knowledge of deletion rules (e.g., deletion of subject, object, auxiliary verb, and main verb), non-basic word order (i.e., other than SOV), and other strategies such as foregrounding, backgrounding, changing a topic, going back to a topic after a diversion, etc. is required to handle a connected discourse.

At the sociolinguistic level, the degree of adaptability of speech and style according to the situation and the social status of the interlocutor and the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor is needed for native-like control of a language. In Hindi, among other things, choice of an appropriate second person pronoun (there are three forms for English 'you'), salutation, language code (spoken or written) will depend on the interplay of various sociolinguistic factors such as age, sex, status, relationship, and formal vs. informal setting.

After determining the important Hindi-specific factors at phonological, morphological, syntax, discourse, and sociolinguistic levels, the question is how to determine the required degree of control for each of the factors. In other words, how to decide things such as whether Hindi ne-rule or the passive construction is expected to be fully controlled at the advanced level or at the superior level. Similarly, at what level should we expect a full control of the Hindi numbers (one to a hundred) or the kinship terms (for the immediate as well as the extended family), which are hard to learn either because of their irregular nature or because there is very little use of such a vocabulary in the real world.

The expected degree of control of a particular feature can be sometimes so important for a particular language that control of the specific feature may be a crucial deciding factor for the candidate's rating. In Spanish, for instance, a full control of regular present tense is considered a must for someone to be rated as an Intermediate Mid.

There can be at least three different ways of determining the expected degree of control of different features at different proficiency levels for a specific language. One is observational, that is, trained teachers and scholars of a language get together, and on the basis of their experience and observations they decide what to expect in terms of the trisection - function, content, and accuracy - from a novice, an intermediate, an advanced, and a superior level candidate of that language.

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Another approach for deciding an expected level of performance at different proficiency levels of a language can be data-oriented. This means that first a large number of proficiency tests should be conducted and rated according to the generic guidelines. After obtaining a reliable sample of proficiency tests at each of the levels, the sample interviews should be analyzed for their degree of control of various features in terms of full, partial, and concept control. The norming results of different level speech samples for full, partial, and concept control will determine the guidelines for that language.

The first method runs the risk of subjectivity. The second method has the merit of providing objective guidelines. Nevertheless, in this approach there is a risk of having holes in our sample data. This may result into incomplete level descriptions. The best approach, therefore, would be a mixed approach. This would first require formulation of tentative level descriptions through a data analysis approach and then supplementing the results with observations of experienced teachers in the field. It would seem that all the existing language-specific level descriptions have been developed through an observational approach. It would be worth trying the mixed-approach for developing Hindi level descriptions that should yield results which will be objective as well as meet the intuitions and observations of most language teachers. It is hoped that level descriptions obtained through this method would be acceptable to teachers and testers of the language at large.

The data analysis approach is expensive in terms of time, but considering the far-reaching effects of proficiency guidelines of a language, It can be a good investment. Proficiency guidelines of a language are not only helpful in evaluating a proficiency test, these can be used for developing a coherent curriculum for proficiency-based instruction. These will help sequence language materials appropriately for teaching and learning. There are theoretical implications of language-specific guidelines as well. Comparative analyses of proficiency guidelines of various languages may reveal patterns of second language acquisition of various linguistic features across languages. There may be patterns across genetically, typologically, or areally related languages. For instance, we may find that it takes longer to control embedded structures in left-branching languages than in right-branching languages; the control on verb morphology may take less time in verb-medial languages than in verb-final languages. Most Indian languages may reveal that numbers from one to a hundred are fully controlled only at the advanced level. At this point these are only speculations which need to be verified with actual data from language-specific descriptions.

In sum, in order to create a valid set of Hindi specific proficiency guidelines for different modalities we need to consider the accuracy of descriptions which will show many Hindi-specific grammar features and their degree of control at different levels of proficiency in Hindi. Also, we need to study the different functions and content areas in different language skills in Hindi, which are highly restricted in the higher levels of language use in the Indian context because of the presence of a competing dominant language.

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African Language Teaching and ACTFL Team Testing

This article reports on the work done toward establishing proficiency guidelines for a variety of African languages. It describes the activities of a workshop held on the University of Wisconsin campus May 15 - 17, 1987 with the help of funds given to the African Studies Centers of Michigan State University and The University of Wisconsin by the U.S. Department of Education. The workshop was held concurrently with a related workshop sponsored by Yale University, on the development of proficiency guidelines for Hausa and Swahili.

The authors wish to note that while they are the primary authors, other participants have had an opportunity to read and comment on a draft of this paper.

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AFRICAN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND ACTFL TEAM TESTING

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Background

This paper describes the results of a workshop whose major focus was the application of ACTFL language proficiency testing to African languages. The specific problem addressed concerned whether an alternative proficiency testing procedure could be developed for those languages for which there may never be certified ACTFL proficiency testers. Participants at the conference included three ACTFL consultants, representatives from African language programs throughout the United States (Appendix A), many of whom had attended a related workshop at Stanford University the previous year, and the workshop coordinator, David Dwyer. The ACTFL consultants were: David Hiple, ACTFL trainer and representative; Sally Magnan, University of Wisconsin and ACTFL trainer (French) and Roger Allen, University of Pennsylvania and ACTFL trainer (Arabic).

This three-day workshop began with a discussion and review of the ACTFL proficiency guidelines, followed by a presentation and evaluation of the proposed alternative oral proficiency testing, and ended with the planning and coordination of future research efforts. Because of the interdigitation of the two workshops between Michigan State University/University of Wisconsin and Yale University, we were able to structure our workshop in the following way. Each morning and afternoon period began with a one hour plenary session. Then, while most participants attended the other plenary workshop, a planning subcommittee consisting of the workshop organizer and consultants, worked on facilitating the running of the next plenary session by revising the agenda based on comments and suggestions from the other participants. The consultants, Hiple, Magnan and Allen, reported that while they had not experienced this format before they found it useful, for it permitted the workshop to anticipate the needs of the other participants as well as smooth out issues before entangling the plenary discussion. Participants reported that they had a sense of movement and progress, though some felt left out of the planning sub-sessions.

Coordination of African language programs in the U.S.

The Title VI African Studies Centers have engaged in a number of projects aimed at coordinating efforts of language instruction in this country so that the limited resources, financial, human and material, can be effectively used. Prior to this workshop, these activities have included (1) a 1979 meeting which focused on the needs and priorities for the teaching of African languages in the United States in the 1980s (Dwyer and Wiley, 1981) and on prioritizing African languages to be taught in the United States (See appendix B); (2) a 1984 meeting to prepare in which guidelines for the development of writing and evaluating African language materials (Dwyer, 1986a); (3) an identification of the resources on a world-wide basis, available for the study of African languages; (4) a preliminary evaluation of such materials (Dwyer, 1986b); (5) a workshop held at Stanford University which focused on the initial exploration of the suitability of the ACTFL oral proficiency testing model for African languages; (6) a project undertaken by Bokamba at the University of

Illinois to develop an interactive, computer based program for the learning of Swahili and Wolof, and finally, (7) a project by Bennett and Biersteker to develop proficiency profiles for Hausa, Swahili and Arabic (Bennett and Biersteker, 1987).

Proficiency Evaluation

The Stanford workshop marks a turning of attention to language proficiency by the African language teaching community. The stimulus for this shift in attention came largely from the outside and was manifested through statements in the Title VI center RFPs (Requests for Fundable Proposals) where it was made clear that the centers individually and collectively would be rewarded for working toward adopting a system of language proficiency evaluation. During that workshop two complementary goals emerged: 1) exploration of the potential utility of ACTFL evaluations for learners of African languages; and 2) the continued development of language proficiency profiling undertaken by Bennett, Biersteker and Dihoff.[1]

In the spring of 1986, Stanford University, under the leadership of Will Leben, organized a four-day intensive ACTFL workshop for teachers of African languages with the aim of examining the suitability of the ACTFL oral proficiency testing model for African languages. While most of the training and most of the practice interviewing was in English, the final sessions were devoted to experimentation with interviewing learners of African languages, primarily Hausa and Swahili.

The participants of that workshop concluded that despite some Eurocentric bias, the ACTFL model was, nevertheless, based on sound principles such that with a reasonable amount of effort, the model could be applied to African languages to provide a reliable and valid means of evaluating learner proficiency. In addition, conference participants agreed to make an effort to achieve ACTFL proficiency certification in English with the aim of working toward developing ACTFL guidelines for the highest priority African languages and working with ACTFL to establish a network of certified evaluators for those languages. Participants also agreed to experiment informally, using the ACTFL model with evaluating students learning African languages.

Benefits of ACTFL Proficiency Testing

At the 1987 Madison workshop reported here,, participants identified a number of important benefits associated with an ACTFL capability for African languages. Any such benefit derives from the capacity of the ACTFL model to provide a valid and reliable statement of language (speaking, listening, reading, writing) proficiency which is independent of the manner and methods of teaching and learning, the institution, the learning materials used, and the language itself. This in effect provides a common metric which can be used across programs, across languages, and across pedagogical methodologies. An established common metric then permits the following:

Proficiency-based language requirements
Many institutions have begun looking towards a competency based language requirement which could easily be based on the attainment of a given ACTFL level.

Title VI Level two fellowships

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1 Bennett and Biersteker are developing an instrument that is complementary to the ACTFL model and which provides a diagnostic evaluation of the learner proficiency. Associated with this model are also two workshops, one held at the University of Wisconsin in June of 1986 and one run concurrently with the workshop being discussed here.

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In the event that a second level of National Resource Fellowship becomes established, the applicant would have to demonstrate a designated threshold level of proficiency in order to qualify for the fellowship.

Summer institute abroad fellowships

ACTFL ratings could provide a fair and dependable means for identifying those students who would benefit most from a summer institute abroad.

Uniform expectations

As long as ACTFL evaluations remain valid and reliable, they can provide the basis of establishing uniform expectations of learner performance in the African language programs in this country.

Field research grants

ACTFL ratings will make it easier for applicants to demonstrate that their language proficiency is adequate to conduct the field research that they have proposed.

Career Opportunities

Language teachers (Swahili, Hausa and Arabic) will be able to demonstrate their level of language proficiency when being considered for a language teaching situation. Other professions, such as those in development, The Peace Corps and The Foreign Service, may also benefit from the availability of these proficiency ratings.

Evaluating Language Programs

Having established uniform expectations for learner achievement on a language by language basis, individual programs can examine the relative effectiveness of their methodologies, program structure and materials.

Serving as the Basis for Proficiency Profiling

Some work has been initiated (Bennett, Biersteker and Dihoff) towards the development of diagnostic proficiency profiles which can be used to give both teachers and students alike a clearer understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and in so doing identify the areas which need to be developed to move on to a higher level of proficiency.

Receiving ACTFL Certification

To receive certification as an ACTFL proficiency evaluator, a trainee must be a superior level speaker of the target language, and must demonstrate the ability to elicit full speech samples using standard interview techniques and to rate the samples accurately on the rating scale. Most testers undergo a four-day workshop, followed by a postworkshop training phase. In this phase, trainees conduct 10 taped interviews with learners at various levels of proficiency in the target language. These tapes are then reviewed by the certified trainer and comments are given to the trainee who then conducts an additional 15 taped interviews, again of various levels, to qualify for certification. If the elicitation technique exhibited in the interviews is deemed adequate and the ratings of proficiency agree with those of the trainer, the trainee will be certified as an ACTFL proficiency evaluator for the target language.

The Problem With Respect to African Languages

The problem confronting proficiency testing for African languages stems from the fact that Africa is a region of considerable linguistic diversity, having somewhere between 1500 and 2000 languages, and that the resources for studying and teaching them are quite limited. It is clear then, that certified oral proficiency testers will never exist for most of these languages. The

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problem has been alleviated somewhat by the development of a priority listing (Appendix B) based on the number of speakers, regional, national or international use and other factors.[2]

The Team Model

As a possible means of coping with this problem, the participants of the workshop were asked to examine critically an alternative format to the ACTFL oral proficiency interview. This alternative model would involve an ACTFL proficiency interview conducted not by a single individual proficient in the target language and ACTFL certified, but of a team consisting of:
1) A native speaker of the target language who is not a trained proficiency evaluator.
2) An ACTFL trained and certified evaluator who is not necessarily proficient in the target language.

This team model would involve proficiency interviewing with generic, but not language specific, ACTFL level guidelines.

Discussion of the Team Model

The discussion by the participants concluded that the team model was promising, but that a number of modifications may be necessary to avoid potential problems. The standard ACTFL interview has the following sequential components: a) warm-up, b) level check to establish the highest level of sustained ability, c) probes to establish the level at which language can no longer be sustained and d) wind-down. (A brief description of the ACTFL levels of proficiency is given in Appendix C.) This procedure may have to be interrupted by one or two breaks to allow the evaluator and the native speaker to consult on the speech sample that is being obtained. Interviewees should be made aware of such breaks in advance and the breaks should appear as a natural aspect of the interview. One way to achieve this would be to designate one segment of the interview as a role-playing situation.

Participants agreed that instructions for the native speaker need to be developed. These instructions would be relatively brief (one to three pages) explaining the procedure and the native speaker's role in the process and possibly augmented with a video tape further illustrating the procedure. The exact nature of these instructions would be the topic of another workshop (see Appendix D).

Participants also agreed that the certification of a team evaluator ought to involve special training such as workshops for Africanists who have already been certified as ACTFL evaluators in a specific language such as English.

The remedies for controlling for both evaluator and native speaker biases involve either submitting interview tapes to evaluator teams at other institutions for a second opinion[3] or having other evaluator teams test via telephone interviews. Solutions for evaluator atrophy (arising from infrequent interviewing) and maintaining level reliability included (a) holding annual or biannual refresher courses, (b) holding interviews in more than one language and (c) conducting interviews in one place where a number of ACTFL teams would be in attendance. Most of the attention, however, was given to the question of how the team interview could be structured to provide a ratable sample. Here, three specific suggestions were offered: *i*) modifying the structure of the interview, *ii*) special training for the native speaker and *iii*) special training for the evaluator.

While all the proposed remedies need to evaluated through testing and experimentation, the

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[2] Details concerning this list appear in Dwyer and Wiley, 1981.

[3] A partial listing of second opinion evaluation resources is given in appendix D.

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sense of the workshop was that remedies did exist for the above-mentioned problems and that the ACTFL team approach did represent a realistic approach to proficiency evaluation for African languages.

Future Directions

With near consensus on the potential of the team model and its appropriateness for African languages, the group went on to suggest a three year plan to reach these goals:

1988   A standard ACTFL Workshop possibly using English, French and Arabic as the languages of certification to be held at the University of Wisconsin. A subcommittee under the leadership of a committee headed by Mohammed Eissa and consisting of Richard Lepine, Eyamba Bokambá, Beverly Mack and Dustin Cowell will also seek special funding for this effort, given the short lead time of the project. Patricia Kunst volunteered to coordinate the 1988 program. The starting date for this five day workshop has been set for Wednesday May 25. At this time, preparation for the 1989 workshops will be undertaken.

1989   A workshop to explore the design of the alternative ACTFL team approach that emphasizes the development of instructions for the native speaker described above to be held at UCLA under the leadership of a group headed by Russell Schuh and including Tucker Childs and Will Leben.

1990   Two workshops establishing guidelines for the ACTFL proficiency evaluation of Hausa (coordinated by Boston University and Swahili (coordinated by Yale University).

1990   A second workshop to finalize the development of the ACTFL team model. The time and location of this workshop are yet to be determined.

Another set of activities were suggested by participants. Boston University would begin to archive Hausa proficiency interviews and Yale University would do the same for Swahili. Others expressed interest in making transcripts of the interviews with varying degrees of detail, indicating that such transcripts would be useful for research and that such activities should be included in center proposals.

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APPENDIX A

Workshop Participants

*Roger Allen	University of Pennsylvania
Mahdi Alosh	The Ohio State University
Ann Biersteker	Yale University
Eyamba Bokamba	University of Illinois
Vicki Carstens	Yale University
Hazel Carter	University of Wisconsin
G. Tucker Childs	University of California at Berkeley
John Chileshe	University of Zambia
Dustin Cowell	University of Wisconsin
Abraham Demoz	Northwestern University
Katherine Demuth	Boston University
Ivan Dihoff	The Ohio State University
Mallafe Drame	University of Illinois
David Dwyer	Michigan State University
Mohammad Eissa	Northwestern University
*David Hiple	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Hassan El Nagar	University of Wisconsin
John Hutchison	Boston University
Magdalena Hauner	University of Wisconsin
Patricia Kuntz	University of Wisconsin
Will Leben	Stanford University
Richard Lepine	Northwestern University
Beverly Mack	George Mason University
*Sally Magnan	University of Wisconsin
Leocadie Nahiskakiye	University of Wisconsin
Mark Plane	University of Wisconsin
Mohamed A. Saraireh	University of Wisconsin
Russell Schuh	University of California at Los Angeles
Jennifer Yanco	Boston University

*(The asterisk is used to identify those participants who served as consultants.)

APPENDIX B

Language Priorities Categories

Group A Languages (Highest Priority)

1. Akan
2. Amharic
3. Arabic
4. Chewa/Nyanja
5. Fulfulde (Fula/Peulh/Fulani)
6. Hausa
7. Igbo
8. Kongo
9. Malagasy
10. Mandingo
11. Ngala (Lingala)
12. Oromo (Galla)
13. Ruanda/Rundi
14. Sango
15. Shona
16. Somali
17. Sotho/Tswana (Ndebele)
18. Swahili
19. Tigrinya
20. Umbundu
21. Wolof
22. Xhosa/Zulu/Swazi
23. Yoruba

Group B Languages (Second Priority)

1. Anyi/Baule
2. Bamileke
3. Bemba
4. Berber
5. Chokwe/Ruund
6. Efik/Ibibio
7. Ganda (Luganda)
8. Gbaya
9. Gbe (Ewe/Mina/Fon)
10. Kalenjin (Nandi/Kipsigis)
11. Kamba (Kikamba)
12. Kanuri
13. Kikuyu
14. Kimbundu
15. Krio/Pidgin (Cluster)
16. Luba
17. Luo/Acholi/Lango
18. Luyia
19. Makua/Lomwe
20. Mende/Bandi/Loko
21. Mongo/Nkundo
22. Moore/Mossi
23. Nubian
24. Senufo
25. Songhai
26. Sukuma/Nyamwezi
27. Tiv
28. Tsonga
29. Yao/Makonde (Bulu)
30. Zande

Group C Languages (Third Priority)

1. Dinka (Agar/Bor/Padang)
2. Edo (Bini)
3. Gogo (Chigogo)
4. Gurage
5. Hehe
6. Idoma
7. Igbira (Ebira)
8. Ijo
9. Isle de France Creole
10. Kpelle
11. Kru/Bassa
12. Lozi (Silozi)
13. Maasai
14. Meru
15. Nama (Damara)
16. Nuer
17. Nupe
18. Nyakusa
19. Nyoro
20. Sara
21. Serer
22. Sidamo
23. Soninke
24. Suppire
25. Susu
26. Temne
27. Teso/Turkana
28. Tumbuka
29. Venda

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APPENDIX C

ACTFL Levels*

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SUPERIOR:	Can support opinions, hypothesize, talk about abstract topics. Gets into, through, and out of an unfamiliar situation.

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ADVANCED PLUS:	Can perform at the Superior level sometimes, but not consistently.
ADVANCED:	Can narrate and describe in past, present and future time, and get into, through and out of a survival situation with a complication.

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INTERMEDIATE HIGH:	Can perform at the Advanced level sometimes, but not consistently.
INTERMEDIATE MID: INTERMEDIATE LOW:	Can create with language, ask and answer questions on familiar topics. Gets into, through, and out of a simple survival situation.

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NOVICE HIGH:	Can perform at the Intermediate level sometimes, but not consistently.
NOVICE MID: NOVICE LOW:	No functional ability. Limited to memorized material.

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0	No ability in the language whatsoever.

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*Source: Part of an ACTFL packet handed out at the workshop. This example is intended to be only a brief characterization of the ACTFL proficiency levels. [Editors' note: The complete ACTFL generic guidelines are in the main volume of articles.]

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APPENDIX D

Preliminary listing of those willing to review proficiency interviews and associated languages

University	Name	Languages
Berkeley	Tucker Childs	Kisi
	Others	Yoruba, Igbo, Swahili
Boston	Katherine Demuth	Sesotho/Setswana, Swahili
	John Hutchinson	Hausa, Bambara, Kanuri
	Jennifer Yanco	Lingala, Zarma/Songhai
George Mason	Beverly Mack	Hausa
Illinois	Eyamba G. Bokamba	Lingala, Swahili
	Mallafe Drame	Wolof, Mandinka
Northwestern	Muhammad S. Eissa	Arabic
	Richard Lepine	Swahili
Ohio State	Mahdi Alush	Arabic
UCLA	Russell G. Schuh	Hausa
Wisconsin	Hazel Carter	Shona, Tonga, Kongo
	Patricia Kuntz	Yoruba
	Mark Plane	Swahili
Yale	Ann Biersteker	Swahili, Kikuyu
	Vicki Carstens	Yoruba, Swahili
	Others	Zulu; Shona, Setswana, and Amharic
Stanford	Will Leben	Hausa
Michigan State	David Dwyer	Krio, West African Pidgin English, Mende
	Others	Amharic, Swahili, Hausa

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APPENDIX E

Bibilography

ACTFL

1982   ACTFL Language Proficiency Project, <u>Modern Language Journal</u> 66, ii:179.

n.d.   The ACTFL/Texas Proficiency Project, Hastings-on-Hudson: ACTFL.

Bennett and Biersteker

1986a   Proficiency Profiling -- an introduction to the model. Manuscript distributed at Proficiency Workshop I, University of Wisconsin, Madison, · June 1986.

1986b   On categorizing language courses: reconciling language characteristics and performance expectations. Chapter 7 of <u>Proceedings of the Conference on African Language Materials Guidelines</u> (Draft Version), David Dwyer (ed.), African Studies Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing Michigan.

Childs, G. Tucker

1987   The communicative hierarchy: Word, Sentence and Discourse. Paper delivered at the African Language Proficiency Workshop II, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 14 May.

Dwyer, D.

1986a   <u>Proceedings of the Conference on African Language Materials Guidelines</u> (Draft Version), African Studies Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing Michigan.

1986b   <u>African Language Resource Handbook</u> (Draft Version), African Studies Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing Michigan.

Dwyer, D. and Wiley, D.

1981   "African Language Instruction in the United States: Direction and Priorities for the 1980s". East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Liskin-Gasparro, Judith

1984   The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: An Historical Perspective. In Theodore V. Higgs, ed. <u>Teaching for Proficiency, the Organizing Principle</u>. ACTFL Foreign Language Education Series, (Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Company).

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