

Lesson planning

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Foreign-language methodologists will want to train prospective teachers or TAs in writing objectives for proficiency and in setting proficiency goals for courses. In addition, to evaluate their immediate progress, future instructors will learn to prepare daily and weekly goals. They will prepare lesson plans which not only include variety, the four skills, culture, presentation of new material, and review of old material, but also the functions on which they are working and the contexts in which they are important. Furthermore, teachers will learn how to include periodic checks for students' accuracy in communication and to judge whether their students are progressing satisfactorily. Periodic proficiency tests or survival laboratories, such as the one devised at the University of Illinois, provide techniques for continuous evaluation of progress (Omaggio, 32).

The following self-evaluation checklist may prove helpful to methods students in verifying whether their lesson plan aims toward proficiency each day.

Checklist for daily progress toward proficiency

1. Did I include a warm-up activity which asked students to perform a function or a contextualized or personalized activity?
2. Was most classroom interaction in the target language?
3. If I presented vocabulary or grammar, did I do so in context?
4. Were any exercises I did contextualized or meaningful?
5. Did I include some speaking practice which required students to interact or be creative with the language?
6. Was small-group work included in the class hour?
7. Did the students participate in some type of role-playing activity?
8. Did I include sufficient listening practice to help my students understand utterances in situations?
9. Did I include or assign writing practice which gave students practice in writing on topics of interest to them?
10. Did I provide a context for culture and an opportunity for students to express a culturally appropriate act?
11. Did I correct students in a way that was helpful to them?

Teachers may not be able to include all of these areas each day because of time constraints, but the checklist will provide a reminder of their daily goals. Moreover, other factors may be important in individual cases. Grittner (13) provides a comparable checklist. Freed (11) reports that TAs who teach to the proficiency requirement at the University of Pennsylvania provide "for more situational or contextual activities which recognize functional aspects of language use as well as the occasional introduction