

SCHOOL-COLLEGE ARTICULATION AND PROFICIENCY STANDARDS: A STATUS REPORT

0604-1

FOREIGN language teachers and state departments of education throughout the nation have taken a renewed interest in school-college articulation and in the establishment of standards for different levels of instruction. During 1985-86 the Northern Arizona University Department of Modern Languages obtained a Critical Languages grant from the US Department of Education, whose objectives included the gathering of information for the Arizona state task forces working on articulation. As part of our fact-finding efforts, we sent a questionnaire to learn what others were doing to improve articulation or to set proficiency standards. We asked specifically about ACTFL-ETS guidelines. This article reports on the status of projects nationwide as indicated in questionnaire responses.

Patricia W. Cummins

Before taking the leap, we wanted responses of states that had already adopted guidelines either for proficiency standards or for articulation. We also wanted to know what other proficiency standards were used by those who either did not know about ACTFL-ETS guidelines or rejected them. From the latter group, we were interested to learn the problems they saw with implementing the guidelines. Thus the purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the soundness of our plans for articulation guidelines and to make modifications based on the experience of others.

Need for Articulation and Uniform Standards

The need for articulation and uniform standards is obvious. Students who have studied a language in high school for two, three, or four years must sometimes start the same language all over again in college, with or without placement testing. Peter Hagiwara has found that, for placement purposes, an average of 1.6 years of language study in high school was needed for one semester of college work. A primary purpose of our articulation study is to work to close the gap between the two levels; our goal is to set guidelines so that one year of high school language study corresponds closely with one semester of college study.

Common standards for levels of study can be used to encourage articulation, or they can limit themselves either to the schools or colleges (see Phillips, "Outcomes"; Magan, "Assessing"). Most groups in our survey who were engaged in setting standards at any level expressed an interest in knowing about other groups' standards. Respondents included those involved in experiments at the state or county level, the individual school level, and the individual university level. All groups were interested in common standards. The survey's underlying assumption was that secondary school and college teachers have similar objectives for language acquisition, even though they may use different pedagogical materials and teach in different settings.

The Questionnaire

Purpose

When we sent out the 1986 questionnaire (see appendix A), our plan was to use ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines, at least in part, for articulation in our state.

Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for three distinct groups with different perspectives on articulation and proficiency. One was composed of leaders of seventy-three collaboratives and of presidents of all state foreign language organizations, individuals who were most likely to know about local efforts in articulation through their contacts with members in both the schools and colleges. A second group was made up of all state language supervisors and some local education agency representatives mentioned by early respondents. The third group consisted of people involved in proficiency—individuals who had devised the ACTFL guidelines, trainers, tester workshop and curriculum workshop participants in states where proficiency had a significant impact, authors of articles and books about proficiency, and others recommended by early respondents.

Results of the Questionnaire

Response Rate and Interest

Of the 273 questionnaires mailed, 155 completed questionnaires were returned, giving us a response rate of 58.7%. The responses reflected good representation for all three groups: 43 respondents belonged to two of the three groups (proficiency experience and membership in a collaborative or state organization accounted for over half of the duplication) and 2 respondents belonged to all three of the groups. The total representation of each group was as follows: collaboratives and state language organizations, 91; state and local education agencies, 53;

The author is Professor of French and Chair of the Department of Modern Languages at Northern Arizona University.

proficiency experience, 58. In fall 1986 we called at least one person in all fifty states to verify current activity and to check the accuracy of the information given in appendix B. Along with their questionnaires, 47 respondents sent us information on projects going on in their areas, including several state department guidelines, and 10 respondents sent information after we telephoned them.

Kinds of Articulation and Proficiency Projects

As appendix B reveals, the vast majority of states are engaged in devising or have devised some kind of articulation or proficiency guidelines. Most were aware of ACTFL-ETS guidelines, and many made use of them to one degree or another. During our follow-up telephone calls, a few state foreign language supervisors indicated they had worked closely with ACTFL or ETS representatives in designing guidelines, while other supervisors used a variety of sources that may or may not have included ACTFL-ETS guidelines. Some states had borrowed from earlier guidelines provided by colleagues in other states. Since ACTFL-ETS guidelines are not specifically designed for children, a number of respondents dealing with K-12 explained that because ACTFL-ETS guidelines were not always sufficient, they sometimes made efforts to adapt them. A few states planned to train or had started training teachers in the oral proficiency interview technique, usually in cooperation with a local university. But most were merely content to address the four skills and culture in some way.

Although limited research has been done on proficiency expectations in reading, writing, listening, and culture, as well as speaking, many states have treated those skills unevenly, and few have addressed the interaction of skills. The integration of skills is a crucial consideration when it comes to designing a curriculum, and there is some disagreement on how well ACTFL-ETS guidelines address this issue.

A small number of states provided curriculum workshops to help teachers implement guidelines. This experience reinforced the belief that guidelines have little impact, especially when given as suggestions, unless teachers are shown how they can apply the guidelines in their classrooms with the textbooks they are using. Teachers and supervisors alike felt in-service was a key to using any curriculum guideline or proficiency standard.

Forty of the survey respondents indicated that articulation projects or the designing of proficiency standards in the schools were in process, on state and local levels, in their areas. Other articulation and proficiency projects went on in universities. A proficiency requirement instead of a seat-time requirement was rare, although some institutions established a combination of seat time for graduation purposes and proficiency for program requirements. Several schools said they used ACTFL-ETS standards for testing majors and study-abroad candidates, selecting teaching assistants, or planning teacher preparation programs. Other schools mentioned differ-

ent tests for the same purposes, including locally prepared tests that used computers to measure reading and listening skills.

Teacher Certification

Although not asked directly, several respondents mentioned teacher certification and the oral proficiency interview (OPI). For example, Texas has such a standard and finds that over 60% of those tested for certification place at Intermediate-High or better. They have a problem finding enough testers but hope to increase the number (see Reschke).

Louisiana has an OPI component in French, but there are not enough certified OPI testers to enforce a requirement. At the 1986 meeting of the American Association of Teachers of French, the Commission on Professional Standards debated whether to recommend an oral proficiency rating of Advanced or higher for French teachers who wished to obtain a special AATF endorsement. However, since at that time only ninety-one French testers had been certified and most were in Texas and Illinois, there was concern that AATF could not provide such a test, even if such endorsements were desirable.

Arkansas and Georgia would like a proficiency requirement, but they are faced with a teacher shortage and do not want to raise another hurdle. A Nebraska state committee is recommending a proficiency-based option for a foreign language teaching endorsement. Utah is considering an OPI test for certification. The Wyoming foreign language organization favors higher standards but is not making much headway.

ACTFL-ETS Guidelines: The Curriculum and Materials Development

A limited amount of research is available on proficiency standards and curriculum and materials development. Medley emphasizes that a proficiency-oriented curriculum should be based on student needs and determined more by the goals of the school district or university than by objectives at the national or state level. Birckbichler believes that any curriculum must consider learners' ages and personalities and develop appropriate strategies for the groups in question. Kramsch is concerned that the proficiency movement "has shifted attention from the learning process to the testing of an instructional product" (22) and that it places responsibility on the teacher more than on the learner; Bernhardt worries that ACTFL reading guidelines address more what text characteristics should be than what learners should do. Not surprisingly, the opinions of survey respondents like the researchers varied from enthusiastic or cautiously optimistic to concerned or uncertain.

Nineteen respondents felt that ACTFL-ETS guidelines had favorably influenced their curriculum planning. Eleven thought the guidelines were having a major impact on their teaching or that of the people they supervised, 33 a small or limited impact, and 25 did not know

of any impact on which they could comment in their areas (this last group included respondents who had never heard of the guidelines as well as those who had had no success). Six said it was too early to tell.

Several people who had reservations about test validity, the practicality of testing large numbers of students, and the time and cost for certifying testers nevertheless felt that proficiency goals could in the future have a positive impact on the curriculum. Nine respondents stated that better curriculum planning was the most important result that could be expected of proficiency guidelines. Both those who complained about the difficulty of implementing the guidelines and those who were optimistic cited two problems: teachers were not trained to teach for proficiency goals (16 questionnaires) and an adaptable textbook and materials were hard to find (12 questionnaires).

Curriculum and materials development are the areas that encountered the least opposition and the most sympathy from respondents. Proficiency proponents espoused no one methodology but, rather, an improvement in reading, writing, speaking, and listening with a focus on communication ability (see Omaggio). They cited the need for more emphasis on communicative activities in the classroom, in the textbook, and in the use of authentic materials. Most people favored communicative goals, but many indicated a need for guidance on how to achieve them, and some suggested that more work remains to be done.

Problems Posed by ACTFL-ETS Guidelines

Respondents who criticized the ACTFL-ETS guidelines pointed out that the guidelines are experimental and should not be implemented anywhere until they are proved valid. Jarvis and Kramersch have voiced concern about the OPI. Kramersch is disturbed that the level of communicative difficulty seems to have too much to do with mastery of grammatical and lexical forms in ACTFL-ETS guidelines; she feels the guidelines ignore variational features like social distance, the relative power of the interlocutor, the amount of shared assumptions about a topic, and so on. Jarvis notes that foreign teaching assistants tested with topics in their discipline functioned far better than a generic oral proficiency test could have predicted; he feels that testing should be tailored to the needs it is designed to meet. Test validity of the oral interview, then, is not what people necessarily want for some evaluation situations. Kramersch also is concerned that "critical thinking skills, conceptual development, and skills of empathy cannot be captured by the oral proficiency test, nor do the proficiency guidelines show how to integrate the functional, pragmatic aspect of language and its analytic critical dimensions" (24).

Two respondents stated that they agreed with the article by Lantolf and Frawley, which describes problems with ACTFL guidelines in all skills, but especially with oral testing and the rating scale. The article echoes Hummel's and Jarvis's point about using interest in a topic to

better someone's performance, and it expresses concern about why the person being tested should always be at fault in miscommunication and about how definitions of the different levels are arrived at. Similar problems are raised by Bachman and Savignon.

Some respondents cited problems with test validity and others problems with the nature of the guidelines. The original ACTFL proficiency guidelines, published in 1982, were called provisional. The updated guidelines of 1986 are no longer called provisional, even though it is explained that they "should not be considered the definitive version, since the construction and utilization of language proficiency guidelines is a dynamic, interactive process" (1). The problem in dropping the term *provisional* is that some states are using them as a basis for curriculum decisions. Proponents of the use of guidelines, while not denying the existence of problems, believe that differences of interpretation about what a proficiency orientation should or should not do will not deter educators from seeing proficiency as "a comprehensible frame of reference to which everyone can respond" (Bragger, "Teaching" 13).

Still other respondents were unhappy with the inability or unwillingness of ACTFL to meet demands placed on it. Three types of demands were mentioned. First, ACTFL was said not to be meeting the demand for workshops of all kinds. Potential workshop participants could not attend one in their area, a funded trainer workshop could not take place, and quality of some workshops was faulted. A serious complaint was the time it took to become a certified tester—some trainers took from 6 to 10 months to return a first set of tapes, and two sets minimum were required for certification. Second, ACTFL and those working with ACTFL did not always cooperate with independent researchers working on proficiency; sometimes requests for information went unanswered. Third, ACTFL was found to be slow in responding to inquiries about how to set up workshops, about ACTFL requirements for holding workshops, and about how to implement guidelines locally. Lists of trainers and testers were not available on demand but apparently were given to some and not to others by ACTFL staff. These problems need to be addressed.

Proponents of proficiency guidelines cited the difficulty in persuading secondary school and college teachers and administrators of the advantages of learning about and using the guidelines. Attitudes from apathy to outright hostility have been encountered. Yet most proponents are cautiously optimistic.

Both skeptics and proponents mention the time and cost involved in certifying testers and in testing students; 20 respondents noted a shortage of testers and trainers. ACTFL has had to postpone implementing its requirement that testers obtain recertification every two years, since there are so few current testers and potential testers often do not hear the results of their first tapes for many months. Some teachers are experimenting with cutting down on student testing time by using indirect testing

methods in the language lab (see both articles by Larson and Jones).

Other problems, some significant, were mentioned by small numbers of respondents. One complained that Texas "goals are too vague and . . . the rating system (Intermediate-High) is being applied inconsistently. Too many people are being trained too quickly with too little feedback." Another Texas respondent also had doubts about the impact of the ACTFL guidelines on the curriculum, stating that proficiency as "propagated by ACTFL is not the absolute good which many had hoped for." Several respondents echoed the words of an Oregon teacher: "the whole idea [is] being thought noble but impractical."

Summary

Nationwide, many states are working on articulation and proficiency standards. Over half of those states profess to use ACTFL-ETS standards in some way. Programs in most states are still in process or under review.

States that plan to use ACTFL-ETS standards do not necessarily have sufficient testers and trainers to meet their needs. Many states were overly optimistic on how soon they would be able to meet their states' needs if they decided to do testing on a large scale.

In the area of curriculum, there was much cause for optimism. Many states felt capable of using the goals of the guidelines at least in part in their curricula. But those trained in proficiency sometimes feared misuse. There seems to be a need for someone to be available to assist states and local education agencies with implementation.

Implications for States Working on Articulation or Setting Proficiency Goals

Despite the reservations of many experts about proficiency guidelines, those of ACTFL or of other sources, states and local education agencies want and need curriculum guidelines. Most would agree with the communicative objectives espoused by ACTFL, and many approve of a standard that correlates with a government scale. The concept of a national measure of proficiency is attractive even if flawed.

It seems logical that states wanting to take action and use a standard that aims at uniform goals should not be discouraged from doing so. By the same token, no one assumes any system will be perfect, and everyone should be cautious about making serious personnel decisions on the basis of a single system. The obvious solution seems to be that, in the evaluation of teachers or their students, provision should be made for an alternate evaluation if requested by those being evaluated.

Possible Solutions

Regional and national language resource centers that are currently being established with private and public

funding may well be able to offer solutions to the many problems raised by our questionnaire. We would like to propose that these language centers, in addition to their other projects, provide information and support research and training on articulation and proficiency and other standards.

These language centers could provide information on (a) research for and against a given set of standards, including information on test validity, the experimental status of standards, and the philosophy behind them; (b) grant projects completed or in progress that were funded in the area of articulation and proficiency standards; (c) help available from the language center or elsewhere to implement a given set of standards; (d) articulation and proficiency projects going on in other locations and people to contact there; (e) the names and addresses of available consultants. Researchers on fellowships at language centers could be obligated to publish through the centers their findings on articulation, proficiency standards, test development, and other pedagogical issues.

Language centers could also respond to the criticism of ACTFL for not meeting the demand for setting up workshops. They could address the problems that proponents of ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines have in reaching enough teachers—especially those in rural areas and those who teach other subjects as well as a foreign language—and they could help convince apathetic or hostile colleagues. Among the steps the centers could take are these: (a) organize workshops for tester training, trainer training, and curriculum training at a reasonable cost, perhaps through stipend assistance; (b) provide ACTFL and ETS with independent and uniform evaluators; (c) disseminate information on organizing workshops; (d) maintain a list of experts willing to visit teachers in given regions; (e) perhaps help subsidize teachers in certain cases; (f) handle official interview ratings and promote other certification projects.

The current status of school-college articulation and proficiency standards is marked by change. States engaged in such projects apply both ACTFL-ETS standards and other types of standards. ACTFL does not consider its standards to be definitive, and the experimental tests it has developed for reading, writing, and listening will not be generally available for some time. Even the rating system of the oral proficiency interview is not definitive. Thus, by definition, any state using ACTFL guidelines must keep abreast of refinements in guidelines and of progress in test development. States using other standards should also be aware of issues concerning test validity, teaching philosophy, and the need for experimentation before accepting as final any set of guidelines. States need to stay in touch with one another and be aware of current research. Teachers must have an opportunity to become acquainted with standards by which they and their students will be judged. National and regional language centers can play a vital role if they are designed to meet these needs.

NOTE

¹ For further information on proficiency expectations in reading, see Phillips, "Practical"; Byrnes, "Teaching"; Kaya-Carton and Carton; Lowe. For writing, see Gaudiani; Magnan, "Teaching." For listening, see Byrnes, "Role"; Gilman and Moody; Winitz; Morley. For culture, see Allen; Seelye. For speaking, see Guntermann and Phillips; Rivers, *Communicating*; Savignon and Berns; Bragger, "Materials." For interaction of skills, see Rivers, "Comprehension"; Hummel; and Heilenman and Kaplan.

WORKS CITED AND CONSULTED

Allen, Wendy. "Toward Cultural Proficiency." Omaggio and Levy 137-66.

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*. Hastings-on-Hudson: ACTFL, 1986.

———. *ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines*. Hastings-on-Hudson: ACTFL, 1982.

Bachman, Lyle, and Sandra Savignon. "The Evaluation of Communicative Language Proficiency: A Critique of the ACTFL Oral Interview and Suggestions for Its Revision and Development." MLA Convention. Chicago, 29 Dec. 1985.

Bernhardt, Elizabeth R. "Proficient Texts or Proficient Readers?" *ADFL Bulletin* 18.1 (1986): 25-28.

Birckbichler, Diane. "The Challenge of Proficiency: Student Characteristics." *The Challenge for Excellence in Foreign Language Education*. Ed. Gilbert A. Jarvis. Middlebury: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1984. 47-78.

Bragger, Jeannette D. "Materials Development for the Proficiency-Oriented Classroom." *Foreign Language Proficiency in the Classroom and Beyond*. Ed. Charles James. ACTFL Foreign Language Education. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1985. 79-115.

———. "Teaching for Proficiency: Are We Ready?" *ADFL Bulletin* 18.1 (1986): 11-14.

Byrnes, Heidi. "The Role of Listening Comprehension: A Theoretical Base." *Foreign Language Annals* 17 (1984): 317-29.

———. "Teaching toward Proficiency: The Receptive Skills." Omaggio and Levy 77-107.

Canale, Michael J., and Heidi Byrnes. *Defining and Developing Proficiency Guidelines, Implementations and Concepts*. Ed. Canale and Byrnes. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1982.

Cole, Charlotte, and Floyd Miller. "Developing a Proficiency-Oriented Curriculum at the Secondary Level." *Foreign Language Annals* 18 (1985): 463-68.

The College Board. *Academic Preparation in Foreign Languages: Teaching for Transition from High School to College*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1986.

Gaudiani, Claire. *Teaching Writing in the Foreign Language Curriculum*. Language and Education: Theory and Practice 43. CAL/ERIC, 1981.

Gilman, Robert A., and Loranna M. Moody. "What Practitioners Say about Listening: Research Implications for the Classroom." *Foreign Language Annals* 17 (1984): 331-34.

Guntermann, Gail, and June K. Phillips. *Functional-Notional Concepts: Adapting the Foreign Language Textbook*. Language in Education: Theory and Practice 44. CAL/ERIC, 1982.

Hagiwara, Peter. "Student Placement and College Views on Articulation." *ADFL Bulletin* 17.3 (1986): 51-57.

Heilenman, Laura K., and Isabelle M. Kaplan. "Proficiency in Practice: The Foreign Language Curriculum." *Foreign Language Proficiency in the Classroom and Beyond*. Ed. Charles James. ACTFL Foreign Language Education. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1985. 55-78.

Hummel, Robert D. "Evaluating Proficiency in Comprehension Skills: How Can We Measure What We Can't Observe?" *ADFL Bulletin* 16.2 (1985): 13-16.

Jarvis, Gilbert A. "Proficiency Testing: A Matter of False Hopes?" *ADFL Bulletin* 18.1 (1986): 20-21.

Johnson, Carl H., and Bobby W. LaBouve. "A Status Report on the Testing of Prospective Language Teachers for Initial State Certification." *Foreign Language Annals* 17 (1984): 461-72.

Kaya-Carton, Esin, and Aaron S. Carton. "Multidimensionality of Foreign Language Reading Proficiency: Preliminary Considerations in Assessment." *Foreign Language Annals* 18 (1986): 95-102.

Kramersch, Claire J. "Proficiency versus Achievement: Reflections on the Proficiency Movement." *ADFL Bulletin* 18.1 (1986): 22-24.

Lantolf, James P., and William Frawley. "Oral-Proficiency Testing: A Critical Analysis." *Modern Language Journal* 69 (1985): 337-45.

Larson, Jerry W., and Randall L. Jones. "Proficiency Testing for the Other Language Modalities." *Teaching for Proficiency: The Organizing Principle*. Ed. Theodore V. Higgs. ACTFL Foreign Language Education. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1984. 113-38.

———. "Testing Speaking Ability in the Classroom: The Semi-Direct Alternative." *Foreign Language Annals* 17 (1984): 499-507.

Lowe, Pardee. "The ILR Proficiency Scale as a Synthesizing Research Principle." *Foreign Language Proficiency in the Classroom and Beyond*. Ed. Charles James. ACTFL Foreign Language Education. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1985. 9-53.

Magnan, Sally. "Assessing Speaking Proficiency in the Undergraduate Curriculum: Data from French." *Foreign Language Annals* 19 (1986): 429-38.

———. "Teaching and Testing Proficiency in Writing: Skills to Transcend the Second-Language Classroom." Omaggio and Levy 109-36.

Medley, Frank. "Designing the Proficiency-Based Curriculum." Omaggio and Levy 13-40.

Morley, Joan. *Listening and Language Learning in ESL: Developing Self-Study Activities for Listening Comprehension*. Language in Education: Theory and Practice 59. CAL/ERIC, 1984.

Omaggio, Alice C. "Methodology in Transition: The New Focus on Proficiency." *Modern Language Journal* 67 (1983): 330-41.

Omaggio, Alice, and Stephen Levy, eds. *Proficiency, Curriculum, Articulation: The Ties That Bind*. Middlebury: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1985.

Phillips, June K. "Outcomes and Expectancies in a Proficiency-Oriented Program: Toward Realistic Objectives." *ADFL Bulletin* 16.3 (1985): 11.

———. "Practical Implications of Recent Research in Reading." *Foreign Language Annals* 17 (1984): 285-96.

Reschke, Claus. "Proficiency-Based Foreign Language Teacher Certification: The Texas Project." *ADFL Bulletin* 16.2 (1985): 17-21.

Rivers, Wilga. *Communicating Naturally in a Second Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983.

———. "Comprehension and Production in Interactive Language Teaching." *Modern Language Journal* 70 (1986): 1-7.

Savignon, Sandra J., and Margie S. Berns. *Initiatives in Communicative Language Teaching*. Reading: Addison, 1984.

Seelye, H. Ned. *Teaching Culture: Strategies for Communication*. Lincolnwood: Natl. Textbook, 1984.

Winitz, Harris, ed. *The Comprehension Approach to Foreign Language Instruction*. Rowley: Newbury, 1981.

APPENDIX A
Questionnaire

Circle all appropriate answers

1. I am responding as
 - a. an active member of a collaborative, or state language organization
 - b. a representative of a state education agency
 - c. a representative of a local education agency
 - d. someone actively involved in proficiency testing
(More than one answer is possible)
2. I have been involved in or know about
 - a. setting proficiency goals for university-level language students in my area
 - b. setting proficiency goals for public school language students in my area
 - c. articulation projects between high school and college for language students in my area
 - d. no proficiency goals or articulation goals for students in my area
3. If you circled a, b, or c in question 2, please describe the kinds of goals and objectives you have set or the progress your area has made. (Attachments describing those activities are also welcome.)
4. Comment on the successes of the ACTFL-ETS proficiency movement in language teaching in your institution or in your area.
5. Comment on any problems you have encountered in implementing ACTFL-ETS proficiency goals.

APPENDIX B
State and Local Articulation
and Proficiency Standards in 1986-87

Alabama. Alabama has a guideline, *Alabama Course of Study: Foreign Language*, that is not based on ACTFL-ETS guidelines but addresses proficiency outcomes in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture.

Alaska. Alaska distributed guidelines for each discipline including languages. It tailored ACTFL-ETS guidelines to lower age groups and incorporated a variety of methodologies.

Arizona. One state task force has prepared documents on course equivalency between community colleges and universities. A second task force submitted a draft report to the State Board of Education in April 1987. The second group looked closely at articulation and ACTFL proficiency standards as well. Similarly, all three state universities are considering implemen-

tation of proficiency standards, at least in some languages to some extent.

Arkansas. The *Foreign Language Course Content Guide* was devised by university and public school teachers and is not based on ACTFL-ETS guidelines. They planned mandatory assessment of students on "basic skills" for each course.

California. The publication *Model Curriculum Standards: Foreign Language* (1985) provides state standards that incorporate elements of ACTFL-ETS guidelines. The state is also assisting teachers with seminars and in-service workshops relative to curriculum planning, and it published a *Handbook for Planning an Effective Foreign Language Program*.

Connecticut. Connecticut uses ACTFL-ETS guidelines in student tests for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture. ETS helped the state devise these tests, and ACTFL helped train oral testers, who are still going through the certification process. The Connecticut Council of Language Teachers has a school-college committee that "exists to serve the end of better articulation between schools and colleges." While acknowledging the need for better articulation, the group published a pamphlet entitled *Goals Revisited*.

Florida. Florida is in the process of establishing both proficiency and articulation guidelines. Special needs of the Hispanic community are also being addressed. Articulation between schools, colleges, and junior colleges will be considered. The framework, now completed, is based loosely on ACTFL-ETS guidelines. The Board of Regents, in its report on programs on individual campuses, recommended the ACTFL-ETS guidelines. Its publication is *Foreign Language and Linguistics Program Review Follow-Up* (Jan. 1986).

Georgia. Georgia is revising its philosophies and course guides, including the *Foreign Language Curriculum Guide K-12*. Work will be complete in 1988. At the university level, the Georgia system is working on selecting already existing tests. Some schools had begun selecting one test, but the expectation was that eventually the entire system would agree on one test for a given language.

Hawaii. The state had not yet completed the establishment of objectives for various levels in junior high and high school. However, state language teachers had a Second Language Articulation Committee (elementary through university) currently at work. So far little had been said about ACTFL-ETS guidelines.

Idaho. *Secondary School Course of Study* manuals establish proficiency goals not based on those proposed by ACTFL-ETS.

Illinois. Illinois is working on statewide articulation. A task force is tentatively planned under the aegis of the Illinois State Board of Education during 1987-88. ACTFL-ETS proficiency definitions will be used in determining levels and articulation goals from elementary through university levels. In 1988, ACTFL-ETS guidelines including a proficiency interview will be used in the initial teacher certification process; a field test is being run in 1987.

Indiana. Indiana developed *A Guide to Proficiency-Based Instruction in Modern Foreign Languages for Indiana Schools* for levels I-IV. The proficiency-based curriculum guidelines are separate from those of ACTFL-ETS.

Iowa. Representatives from elementary school through college wrote a model curriculum based on work done in Utah, New York, Indiana, and especially Wisconsin. The state endorses ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines and incorporates them in *A Guide for Developing Curriculum in Foreign Language*.

Kansas. Kansas has now a general curriculum guide that accompanies language-specific guides. They used other states' publications and have incorporated elements of ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines as well as other standards. Teacher workshops on implementation took place at the time the guides were distributed.

Kentucky. The Kentuckiana Language Collaborative in Louisville is looking at both ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines and at articulation according to skill levels. They are keeping the State Department of Education informed.

Louisiana. A *Skills Progression Guide* has been developed for French and Spanish. It includes adaptation of ACTFL-ETS guidelines down to the lower elementary grades.

Maine. Maine has no state mandates for foreign language curricula, but it sent teachers a framework for curriculum in all disciplines in fall 1986. The framework tells teachers how to develop curricula but leaves it to individual school districts to devise specific local guidelines. Statewide, an In-Service Training Committee for teachers is looking at articulation as one of several issues.

Maryland. Maryland revised its curriculum framework, which was in draft form in 1986-87, to reflect ACTFL-ETS proficiency outcomes.

Massachusetts. Massachusetts developed its own tests for teachers' language proficiency and has not officially tried ACTFL-ETS guidelines. No standards for students exist statewide, but individual teachers did report using ACTFL guidelines in their schools.

Michigan. Michigan planned to establish state foreign language performance guides after it hired someone as a state foreign language specialist in 1987. At the college level, articulation groundwork was done in 1986 by Michigan State University.

Minnesota. The University of Minnesota led efforts to establish ACTFL-ETS proficiency guidelines as a basis for articulation. It received grants to train teachers, and a proficiency-based entrance standard, complemented by a graduation requirement, was implemented at the university's College of Liberal Arts. The state revised its 1977 learner outcomes document to incorporate ACTFL-ETS guidelines. A committee composed of representatives at all levels from elementary through university worked on the project in summer 1986. The *Model Learner Outcomes* document stresses communicative competency and has articulation as a goal.

Mississippi. Mississippi has "goals for teaching" in foreign languages that conform to state guidelines for other disciplines. Established in 1985 by language educators at all levels, the goals address the four skills, translation, and culture but do not reflect any national guidelines.

Missouri. The Missouri State Department of Education, in cooperation with the state language association, formed a task force that is addressing issues in foreign languages and international studies, such as teacher training and proficiency standards. Representatives come from elementary through college levels and will make recommendations to the commissioner of education.

Montana. Montana drafted a seven-level approach to language proficiency goals. Their *Draft Outline of Language Learning Sequence* is loosely based on ACTFL-ETS guidelines.

Nebraska. A Scope and Sequence Committee is examining work done elsewhere on articulation and proficiency standards before establishing state guidelines. Teachers at all levels are working to incorporate proficiency-based activities for their texts,

but the role of proficiency for guidelines was still uncertain in spring 1987.

Nevada. Washoe County in Nevada established curriculum guidelines along the lines recommended by ACTFL-ETS. State guidelines, also based on those of ACTFL, are part of the *Secondary Course of Study* for all disciplines.

New Hampshire. New Hampshire has begun to examine ACTFL-ETS guidelines and is planning a pilot proficiency-based curriculum in elementary French and Spanish. The state is working with the statewide foreign language collaborative on proficiency and articulation.

New Mexico. New Mexico had a task force working on certification, student competencies, and a state standards book. Albuquerque had already based curriculum guides on ACTFL-ETS guidelines.

New York. New York's State Department of Education developed one syllabus entitled *Modern Languages for Communication* and another entitled *Latin for Communication*. The former, which covers reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture, is based primarily on a modified form of the ACTFL-ETS guidelines. Articulation has been discussed by collaborative members at all levels.

North Carolina. North Carolina recently developed a *Teacher Handbook for Second Language Studies*, which covers a K-12 curriculum. Although different skills are emphasized at different levels, it covers the four skills and culture and incorporates ACTFL-ETS guidelines to some extent.

North Dakota. Grand Forks published a 1983 *Foreign Language Summer Curriculum Study Project*, a local guide that does not mention ACTFL proficiency objectives in the four skills. At the state level, the North Dakota Foreign Language Advisory Council produced a *North Dakota Foreign Language Curriculum Guide*, based heavily on the Wisconsin state guide. North Dakota began reviewing the state curriculum in 1986.

Ohio. In 1984 the Ohio Modern Language Teachers Association published an articulation task force report not based on ACTFL-ETS guidelines: objectives are stated for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and culture. Ohio's general guidelines for college preparation include foreign language guidelines.

Oklahoma. Oklahoma published *Suggested Learner Outcomes* in French, German, Latin, and Spanish. It addresses the four skills and culture but does not mention ACTFL-ETS guidelines. The suggestions do make use of earlier work of the Texas Education Agency.

Oregon. The Oregon Action Plan for Excellence is developing common and comprehensive curricula. It addresses all school and college levels and includes materials development. A group is examining other states' guides and revising the state foreign language guide in 1987-88. Goal-based planning and linguistic content are given by levels. Because of plans to phase in a one-year language exit requirement for students entering college in 1989 and a two-year requirement for those entering college in 1991, articulation and proficiency tests to assess the relation of semesters of college to years of high school are also being addressed in 1987-88.

Pennsylvania. The State Department of Education has a general curriculum guide for all disciplines that includes a few pages on foreign languages. Of more depth is the series of publications of the Philadelphia public schools: a general *Standardized Curriculum for Foreign Languages* that is used in conjunction with *Basic Essentials for French* or *Basic Essentials*

for Spanish and two language-specific guides that use a variety of proficiency standards including ACTFL-ETS. Similar guides were being published for Latin, Hebrew, German, and Italian.

South Carolina. A committee on Foreign Language Placement and Curriculum was studying the standards used by other states, and it consulted teachers on what was practical for South Carolina. At the college level, schools tried to ensure that placement tests at different locations could assess comparable language ability in a similar manner.

Tennessee. Tennessee was working on proficiency goals for school-college articulation; ACTFL-ETS guidelines were not mentioned. Still, the Nashville area revised its curriculum to be proficiency-oriented. The Board of Regents encouraged school-college academic alliances for better articulation.

Texas. Texas is the state to which ACTFL devoted the greatest amount of attention in implementing its guidelines. Texas obtained funds to determine teacher proficiency levels and improve teacher training programs to reflect better proficiency outcomes. As for proficiency objectives and articulation, numerous college and secondary school teachers and local and state education agencies have prepared proficiency guidelines for their curricula. Workshops designed to prepare teachers for proficiency goals are being offered. In its *Languages in the Schools: Basic Programs Grades 1-12*, the Texas Education Agency developed not statewide standards but leadership descriptions subject to change.

Utah. Utah has published the *Foreign Language Mastery Curriculum*, based largely on ACTFL-ETS guidelines. During 1985-86 the ACTFL-ETS oral interview was tested in Spanish.

Vermont. The state foreign language association and the State Department of Education were working on guidelines for teaching foreign languages that would be comparable to guidelines for other disciplines.

Virginia. During 1985-86, Virginia published a draft of its *Standards of Learning* curriculum for French, German, and Spanish. The standards, based primarily on ACTFL-ETS guidelines, addressed all four skills and culture. Revisions were forthcoming in 1987 and included an assessment component devised by ETS with the Virginia Department of Education. Skill-area focuses are examined at each level.

Washington. The University of Washington, in consultation with secondary schools and community colleges, gradually defined its own proficiency standard for entrance. The State Department of Education developed a draft of state guidelines in 1987, in which several kinds of standards offered teachers a variety of options.

West Virginia. West Virginia has a language-by-language publication with guidelines for teachers that incorporates teacher input from all levels. ACTFL-ETS guidelines were not a significant factor.

Wisconsin. Wisconsin published *A Guide to Curriculum Planning in Foreign Language*, based in part on ACTFL-ETS guidelines. High school and college teachers collaborated in 1986-87 on a revision of systemwide multiskill college placement tests in French, German, and Spanish.