

# Setting Proficiency Targets and Planning to Reach Them

A 5-part video series for the  
South Carolina Department of Education

Greg Duncan  
InterPrep, Inc.

# Video 1

- What does “proficiency” mean?
- What role does motivation play in proficiency development?
- What are the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and how can I use them?
- What does it mean to be a Novice speaker?

# Video 2

- What does it mean to be an Intermediate speaker?
- What are the implications for teaching?

# Video 3

- What does it mean to be an Advanced speaker?
- What are the implications for teaching?

# Video 4

- the critical role of lesson planning in reaching proficiency targets
- the use of backward design as an organizing principle for lesson design
- the importance of primacy-recency in lesson design

# Video 5

- Designing the road map to reach the proficiency targets
- Affirming the value of learning targets that are anchored in proficiency targets

Each video will contain “can do” statements that are intended to focus learning and that, hopefully, you will be able to utter as the video concludes.

# At the end of Video Five, I can ...

- determine what kinds of activities are needed to reach certain proficiency targets
- explain the importance of “backward design” in designing lessons
- design a lesson’s activities that are (1) tied to the lesson’s learning target(s) and (2) to the course proficiency target

# Novice Speakers



Tell your partner or write down what a Novice speaker can do.

Take 2 minutes.

# Novice Speakers

- Respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life
- Convey minimal meaning to interlocutors experienced at dealing with foreigners by using
  - isolated words
  - lists of words
  - memorized phrases
  - some personalized recombinations of words or phrases

# Novice Speakers

- Satisfy only a very limited number of immediate needs

# Intermediate Speakers

Tell your partner or write down what an Intermediate speaker can do.

Take 3 minutes.



# Intermediate Speakers

- participate in simple, direct conversations
- ask and answer questions
- handle basic, uncomplicated communication needed in daily life (survival language)
- create with the language
- use discrete sentences and strings of sentences; can use sentence “connectors”

# Advanced speakers . . .



- participate actively in conversations in most formal and informal settings on concrete and factual topics of personal and public interest;
- narrate and describe in major time frames with good control;

# Advanced speakers . . .



- deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative devices;
- sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length and substance;
- satisfy the demands of work and/or school situations.

# Envisioning a specific lesson in 6 Steps

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

# Planning toward Proficiency

## INTERMEDIATE MID

What kinds of activities, in general, could your students do that would have them working toward Intermediate Mid proficiency?

Take 10 minutes with a partner or as an individual to make a list of activities.

Use the website if you need it:

[www.actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org](http://www.actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org)

# Some generic Intermediate activities

- students interview 10 classmates to ask their favorite singer, favorite athlete, and their favorite entertainment website  
asking & answering questions
- one student describes to his partner what is going on in a picture that his partner can't see  
creating with language
- students role play getting into, through and out of a typical restaurant experience abroad  
survival situation

# Envisioning a specific lesson

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

Step 2: Remembering backward design as my organizing principle

## Lesson Plan

Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson Number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Year to be Taught \_\_\_\_\_

Stage 1: What will students know and be able to do at the end of this lesson?

*DO*

*KNOW*

- What will students be able to do at the end of this lesson that they couldn't do when it started?

- real-life, student-friendly language

What **vocabulary**, **structures** and **culture** do students need in order to meet the learning target?

## Lesson Plan

Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Lesson Number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Year to be Taught \_\_\_\_\_

**Stage 1: What will students know and be able to do at the end of this lesson?**

*DO*

*KNOW*

**Stage 2: How will you know that students can do that?**

At the end of the lesson, how will the students and you know that they can do the learning target?

### Stage 3: What instructional activities will be used?

Opening/Activity 1

Activity 2

Activity 3

Activity 4

Closing/Activity 5

# Envisioning a specific lesson

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

Step 2: Remembering backward design as my organizing principle

Step 3: Establishing my learning targets for the day

# For the purposes of our practice planning today, your lesson's learning targets

I can ...

- tell someone at least 3 places to visit in Madrid and why they should go there
- tell them how to get there using the Madrid metro system

# To achieve the learning targets ...

1. students will need some information about several places of interest in Madrid and what makes them interesting
2. students will need some time to practice telling someone the best places to visit
3. students will need some information about using the Madrid metro system

Think of some ways that  
students can get the  
information about the places  
of interest in Madrid

Take 7 minutes.



madrid2020

Candidate City



What about getting  
information on the Madrid  
metro system . . . how will  
they get that?

Take 3 minutes.

teacher-provided  
information



student-gathered  
information

- students could interview 7 students asking them what their favorite places are and why
- pairs of students could read about several places of interest and share that information with other students
- students could view YouTube videos done by Spanish speakers about places of interest and use that information in making their decisions

# Envisioning a specific lesson

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

Step 2: Remembering backward design as my organizing principle

Step 3: Establishing my learning targets for the day

Step 4: Deciding how students will show that they can do the learning targets

Step 5: Designing activities to support attainment of the learning targets

Plan 3-4 activities that your students could do that would engage the learning targets and would have students producing Intermediate Mid language.

I can ...

- tell someone at least 3 places to visit in Madrid and why they should go there
- tell them how to get there using the Madrid metro system

Take 15 minutes.

# Envisioning a specific lesson

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

Step 2: Remembering backward design as my organizing principle

Step 3: Establishing my learning targets for the day

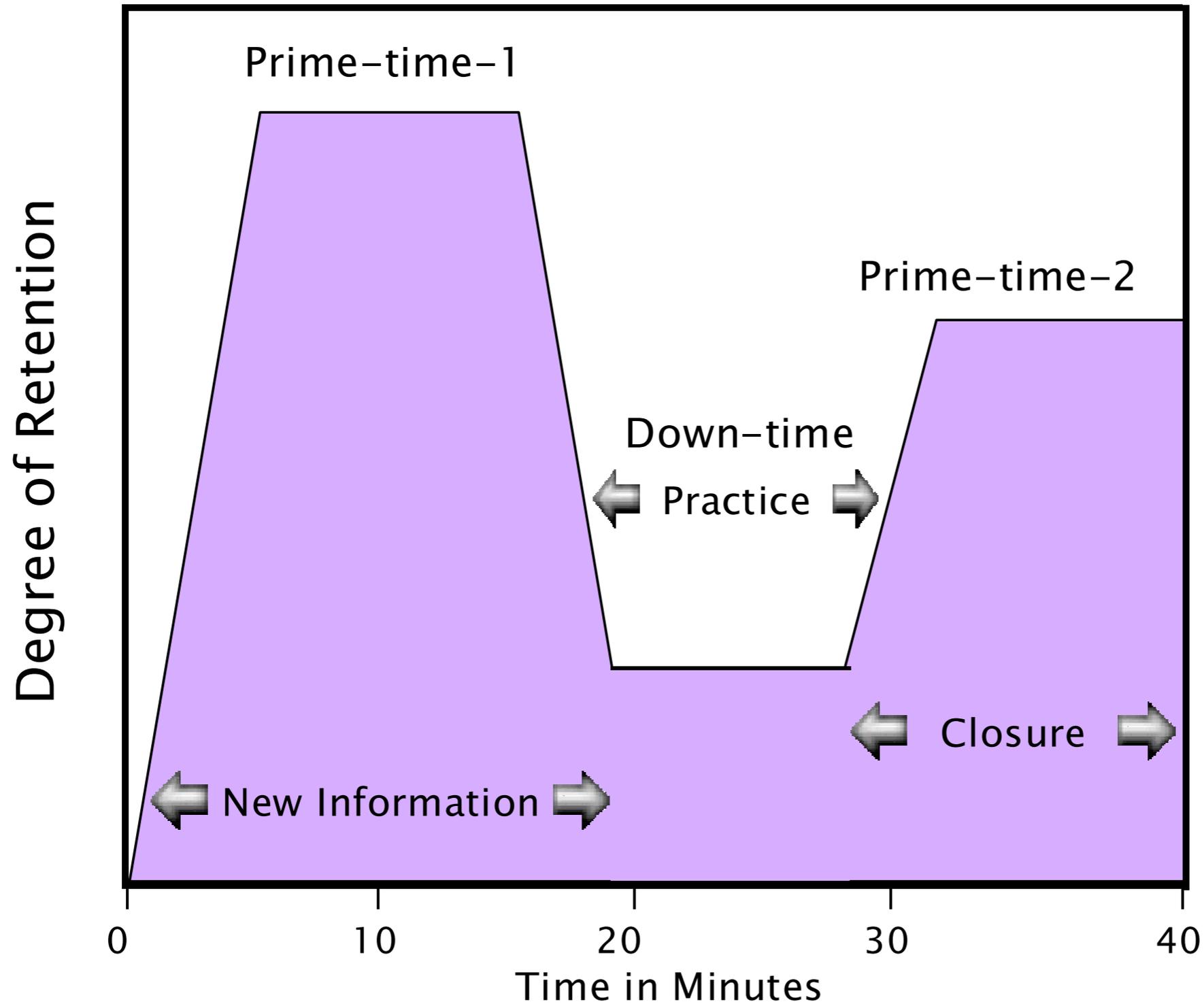
Step 4: Deciding how students will show that they can do the learning targets

Step 5: Designing activities to support attainment of the learning targets

Step 6: Ordering the parts of the lesson keeping the primacy/recency effect in mind

# Primacy / Recency Effect

## Retention During a Learning Episode



# Envisioning a specific lesson

Step 1: What is my proficiency target in this course?

Step 2: Remembering backward design as my organizing principle

Step 3: Establishing my learning targets for the day

Step 4: Deciding how students will show that they can do the learning targets

Step 5: Designing activities to support attainment of the learning targets

Step 6: Ordering the parts of the lesson keeping the primacy/recency effect in mind

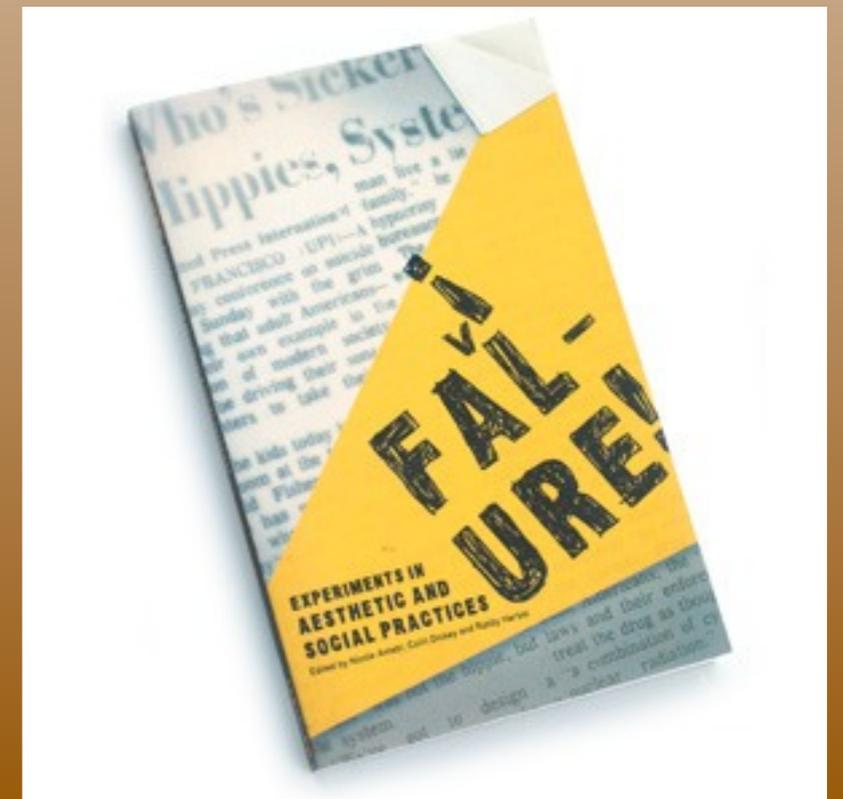
# At the end of Video Five, I can ...

- determine what kinds of activities are needed to reach certain proficiency targets
- explain the importance of “backward design” in designing lessons
- design a lesson’s activities that are (1) tied to the lesson’s learning target(s) and (2) to the course proficiency target



**Failing to plan . . .**

**is planning to  
fail !**





# Setting Proficiency Targets and Planning to Reach Them

A 5-part video series for the  
South Carolina Department of Education

Greg Duncan  
InterPrep, Inc.