

Transforming Language Pedagogy Across LCTLs: Reverse Design, Operationalization, Agency

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Mellon Collaborative Partner Project (Autumn 2016)

Significant professional development for LCTL instructors across the Big Ten & Ivy+

Language Pedagogy Innovation Initiative (Autumn 2017)

Local funds for curricular innovation through reverse design and alignment across all languages

Insights from Mellon work and cross pollination evolve into this process:

- ACTFL 4-day OPI workshop
- Test Design and Development workshops
- Creation of 4-skills assessments
- Curricular Realignment



Why these key steps?

1. ACTFL 4-day OPI workshop

- delivers assessment literacy
- common language of levels and outcomes
- community of experts
- outcomes MUST be defined using ACTFL GL (or CEFR scales)

2. Test design and development workshops and creation of 4-skills assessments

- hands-on approach working with instructors
- ensure valid assessments
- creation of 4-skills assessments

3. Curricular realignment

- reverse design



Operationalization of identified outcomes

Reverse design, i.e. working back from outcome not new to most of us, HOWEVER

the step from outcome to test task – operationalization – is critical and reveals

- how we define the skill
- how we need to be teaching and practicing the skill
- how students will prepare for the test in that skill

Operationalization 1. Intermediate low listening comprehension, M/C

You hear a phone message about a change in plans. Choose the best answer.

1. Where are the friends planning to go?

- a. a movie
- b. a concert
- c. sailing
- d. swimming

2. Where will they meet before the event?

- a. a café
- b. the caller's workplace
- c. the caller's house
- d. the subway station

3. Why does the caller need to change plans?

- a. illness
- b. work
- c. traffic
- d. got lost

4. How will the caller make up for the change of plans?

- a. buy dinner
- b. apologize
- c. pay for tickets
- d. pay next time



Operationalization 2. Intermediate low listening comprehension, table fill-in

You hear a phone message about a change in plans. Fill in the table. You will hear the message twice.

Details about the event	
Plans for before the event and changes	
Plans for after the event and changes	

Operationalization and assessment literacy

- think hard about the characteristics of the outcome (IL listening)
- what evidence is needed to demonstrate INTERMEDIATE (not Novice) listening
- constructed response over selected response
- gets at intermediate-level function “creating with language”

In deepening the operationalization of IL listening, deepen the washback – what can my learners do? what am I doing in the classroom to prepare them? what materials am I using? what kinds of formative testing am I doing?



Operationalization, assessment literacy and instructor agency

- instructor agency: I want to do this, my choice, as opposed to top-down mandates
- agency goes beyond buy-in
 - I identified the outcomes
 - I designed the assessment
 - I understand the design of the assessment and its operationalization
 - I'm accountable for implementing instruction that makes my learners perform successfully on these (i.e. my) assessments

Readiness and buy-in for curricular realignment and redevelopment.



Thank you!
Questions??

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