

NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS

**Intercultural
Communicative Competence**

Novice-Superior



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N C S S F L

Introduction

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication and the *Reflection Tool for Learners* provide a set of examples and scenarios that show how learners use the target language and knowledge of culture to demonstrate their Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC).

Just as the *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* for language clarify the Communication standards in the World Readiness Standards, this tool is intended to clarify and support the Cultures standards and lead learners toward developing ICC. For the purpose of this document, ICC refers to the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with people from other language and cultural backgrounds. ICC develops as the result of a process of intentional goal-setting and self-reflection around language and culture and involves attitudinal changes toward one's own and other cultures. Intercultural communicative competence is essential for establishing effective, positive relationships across cultural boundaries, required in a global society.

Cultures Goal: Interact with cultural competence and understanding.

Standard: Learners use the language to investigate, explain and reflect on the relationship between **Practices and Perspectives** of the cultures studied.

Standard: Learners use the language to investigate, explain and reflect on the relationship between **Products and Perspectives** of the cultures studied.

World Readiness Standards

The NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication:

- Provide samples of how learners can develop and demonstrate their ICC through the language they are learning. The extent to which one can fully understand and participate in a culture is related to the level of language proficiency.
- Apply to a variety of learning and life environments, such as in elementary school, an immersion class, a high school or college course, independent learning, a study abroad situation, or a work setting.
- Serve as a framework, not a curriculum, to integrate target language use and intercultural competencies in instruction, making clear the inextricable link between language and culture.
- Focus on communicative interaction in another culture, i.e., the ability to communicate and articulate in the target language and behave appropriately in the target culture.
- Are illustrated with examples for each proficiency level, paired as complementary examples as learners Investigate and Interact.
- Support deeper learning by providing a Reflection tool with sample scenarios that show how educators can organize activities for intercultural reflection, both inside the classroom in the target language and outside the classroom in English or the target language.
- Are meant to be used as part of a school-wide program that includes educator collaboration with other content areas and time for guided learner reflection on their intercultural experiences.

The use of the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication can be a first step in the process to simplify the complexities of ICC and provide guidance for educators and learners. Rather than a linear process, ICC is more iterative and interactive, like a mosaic of various cultural experiences informed by self-reflection. Each individual begins at different cognitive, cultural and linguistic stages and progresses at various rates.

What this tool IS	What this tool is NOT
<p>Performance descriptors demonstrated consistently over time</p> <p><u>Benchmarks</u>: Identify overarching features of Intercultural Communication to set long term individual or course goals within each proficiency level.</p> <p><u>Indicators</u>: Break down broad benchmarks into manageable chunks to help learners chart progress or inform unit learning outcomes.</p> <p><u>Examples</u>: Break down indicators to show examples of intercultural language and behavior at each proficiency level and suggest real-life or lesson activities.</p>	<p>Not a checklist of tasks to be demonstrated once and checked off</p> <p>It is not sufficient for the learner to show competence in one specific situation.</p> <p>Competencies are spiraled throughout the learning process so that the learner can consistently demonstrate these skills in multiple contexts.</p>
<p>A set of learning examples that can be adapted to school or district curriculum as well as independent learning goals</p> <p>The Can-Do Statements are meant to be adapted to individual learning contexts. They include open-ended “I can...” statements for learners and teachers to customize to fit the content and context of the learning and the targeted proficiency level.</p>	<p>Not a prescribed curriculum</p> <p>The Can-Do Statements are designed to offer samples for modification or elaboration of language syllabi and curricula; they are not intended to provide ready-made intercultural lessons. The statements provided do not claim to be exhaustive or specific to a level of schooling.</p>
<p>One step in the process to develop the communicative aspect of ICC in a learned language</p> <p>The Can-Do statements are intended to be used in conjunction with the ICC Reflection Tool. ICC also requires curiosity, discovery, interaction, self-assessment and reflection for self-examination of attitudes and values.</p>	<p>Not a comprehensive ICC program</p> <p>The Can-Do statements are not meant to be used alone, but along with the ICC Reflection Tool. They can also be used as part of a school-wide program that includes teacher collaboration with other content areas and time for guided learner reflection on their intercultural experiences.</p>
<p>A starting point for self-assessment, goal-setting, and the creation of rubrics for performance-based grading</p> <p>Teachers and learners use the statements for self-evaluation to become more aware of what they know and how they feel about their own and others’ cultures. By using statements aligned to the proficiency scale, it allows teachers to create rubrics that enable learners to chart their progress.</p>	<p>Not an instrument for determining a letter or number grade</p> <p>Growth in intercultural communication is measured over time when tasks are integrated into performance assessments and evaluated using rubrics based on the ACTFL proficiency descriptors.</p>

What is Intercultural Communication?

Intercultural communication is a complex activity that combines cross-cultural knowledge and language skills. It involves initiating, understanding and responding to what is communicated, using culturally appropriate language and behavior in a given context.

For the purposes of this document, the term intercultural communication refers only to the use of culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal skills to build relationships with people of different cultures.

Researchers such as Byram (1997, 2002), M.J. and J.M Bennett (2003), Deardorff (2006), and Fantini (2006) agreed that developing Intercultural Communicative Competence is a complex, non-linear process built from an accumulation of cultural knowledge, practices and social encounters experienced within a variety of cultural contexts. An apt metaphor is a mosaic whose total image is an assemblage of smaller, unique pieces. Each intercultural experience provides an opportunity for interpretation, discovery, interaction and reflection that motivates learners' curiosity and leads to awareness of self and others.

Because intercultural growth involves elements in the affective domain it can be a challenge, and sometimes impossible, for teachers to evaluate learners' progress. Teachers can, however, evaluate how well learners' language use demonstrates intercultural competence, given that the extent to which one can fully understand and participate in a culture is related to the level of language proficiency. The *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication* suggest tasks that allow for and support these opportunities for intercultural encounters.

The *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication* show the intersection of language proficiency and cultural competence, which do not always align. One individual may possess strong cultural competence yet demonstrate a low level of language proficiency (figure 1). Another individual may display high language proficiency but minimal cultural competence (figure 2).

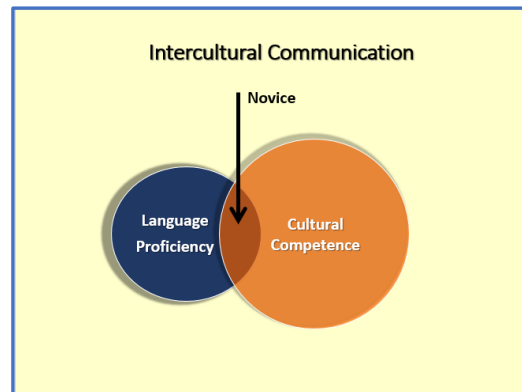


Figure 1

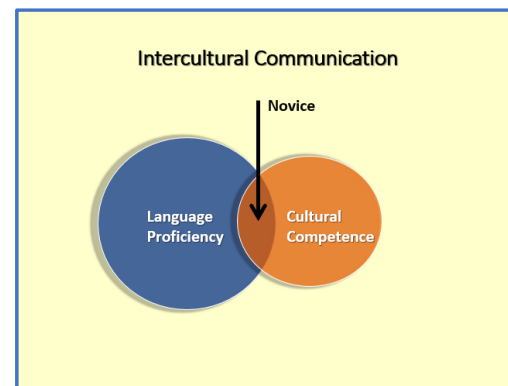

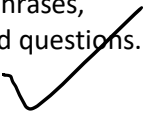
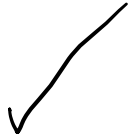


Figure 2

The *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements for Intercultural Communication* focuses on the extent to which learners can demonstrate their intercultural competence through verbal and non-verbal communication. These Intercultural Can-Do Statements are aligned with the Language Can-Do statements to ensure consistency with the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. The statements are intended to depict the linguistic competency from Novice to Distinguished levels of language proficiency across the modes of communication.

NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS
Communication Proficiency Benchmarks

NOVICE	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	SUPERIOR	DISTINGUISHED
Interpretive Benchmarks				
I can identify the general topic and some basic information in both very familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences in texts that are spoken, written or signed. 	I can understand the main idea and some pieces of information on familiar topics from sentences and series of connected sentences within texts that are spoken, written or signed.	I can understand the main message and supporting details on a wide variety of familiar and general interest topics across various time frames from complex, organized texts that are spoken, written or signed.	I can interpret and infer meaning from complex, academic and professional texts on a range of unfamiliar, abstract, and specialized issues that are spoken, written or signed.	I can interpret and infer meaning from dense, structurally sophisticated texts on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, with deeply embedded cultural references and colloquialisms and dialects that are spoken, written or signed.
Interpersonal Benchmarks				
I can communicate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences and questions. 	I can participate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on familiar topics, creating sentences and series of sentences to ask and answer a variety of questions.	I can maintain spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations and discussions across various time frames on familiar, as well as unfamiliar, concrete topics using series of connected sentences and probing questions.	I can participate fully and effectively in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed discussions and debates on issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, including supporting arguments and exploring hypotheses.	I can interact, negotiate, and debate on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the conversation, using spoken, written or signed language.
Presentational Benchmarks				
I can present information on both very familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences through spoken, written or signed language. 	I can communicate information, make presentations and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences through spoken, written or signed language.	I can deliver detailed and organized presentations on familiar as well as unfamiliar concrete topics, in paragraphs and using various time frames through spoken, written or signed language.	I can deliver extended presentations on hypothetical or abstract issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, with precision of expression and to a wide variety of audiences, using spoken, written or signed language.	I can deliver sophisticated and articulate presentations on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the audience, using spoken, written or signed language.

CAN-DO STATEMENTS FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

		NOVICE Benchmark	INTERMEDIATE Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	SUPERIOR Benchmark	DISTINGUISHED Benchmark
		PERFORMANCE INDICATORS				
INVESTIGATE INVESTIGATE PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES TO UNDERSTAND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES		In my own and other cultures I can identify products and practices to help me understand perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can make comparisons between products and practices to help me understand perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can explain some diversity among products and practices and how it relates to perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can suspend judgment while critically examining products, practices, and perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can objectively evaluate products and practices and mediate perspectives.
	INVESTIGATE PRODUCTS	In my own and other cultures I can identify some typical products related to familiar everyday life.	In my own and other cultures I can compare products related to everyday life and personal interests or studies.	In my own and other cultures I can explain how a variety of products of public and personal interest are related to perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can analyze how products of personal and public interest are related to perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can evaluate a wide range of concrete and abstract products from different viewpoints.
	INVESTIGATE PRACTICES	In my own and other cultures I can identify some typical practices related to familiar everyday life.	In my own and other cultures I can compare practices related to everyday life and personal interests or studies.	In my own and other cultures I can explain how a variety of practices within familiar and social situations are related to perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can analyze how practices within informal and formal situations are related to perspectives.	In my own and other cultures I can evaluate a wide range of concrete and abstract practices from different viewpoints.
		NOVICE Benchmark	INTERMEDIATE Benchmark	ADVANCED Benchmark	SUPERIOR Benchmark	DISTINGUISHED Benchmark
		PERFORMANCE INDICATORS				
INTERACT INTERACT WITH OTHERS IN AND FROM ANOTHER CULTURE		I can interact at a survival level in some familiar everyday contexts.	I can interact at a functional level in some familiar contexts.	I can interact at a competent level in familiar and some unfamiliar contexts.	I can interact in complex situations to ensure a shared understanding of culture.	I can engage with complexity and pluricultural identities and serve as a mediator between and among cultures.
	INTERACT WITH LANGUAGE	I can communicate with others from the target culture in familiar everyday situations, using memorized language and showing basic cultural awareness.	I can converse with peers from the target culture in familiar situations at school, work or play, and show interest in basic cultural similarities and differences.	I can converse comfortably with others from the target culture in familiar and some unfamiliar situations and show some understanding of cultural differences.	I can suspend judgement, adapt my language and make appropriate cultural references when interacting with others from the target culture in social and professional situations.	I can show empathy and cultural sophistication in my language when interacting in social, academic or professional situations with others from the target culture.
	INTERACT WITH BEHAVIOR	I can use appropriate rehearsed behaviors and recognize some obviously inappropriate behaviors in familiar everyday situations.	I can recognize that significant differences in behaviors exist among cultures, use appropriate learned behaviors and avoid major social blunders.	I can demonstrate awareness of subtle differences among cultural behaviors and adjust my behavior accordingly in familiar and some unfamiliar situations.	I can adhere to basic social and professional norms and etiquette, read nonverbal cues and adjust my behavior in complicated situations.	I can transition smoothly from formal to informal styles of behavior, respond effectively to nonverbal cues and mediate situations of cultural misunderstanding with empathy

EXAMPLES	NOVICE Examples	INTERMEDIATE Examples	ADVANCED Examples	SUPERIOR Examples	DISTINGUISHED Examples
<p>INVESTIGATE Products and Practices to Understand Cultural Perspectives</p> <p>INTERACT With Others in and from Another Culture</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p> <p>I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p> <p>I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p> <p>I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p> <p>I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p> <p>I can... <i>(customize)</i>.</p>
<p>INVESTIGATE</p> <p>INTERACT</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can identify some products that reveal a stereotype or exaggerated view of a culture.</p> <p>I can work with a peer in the target culture to create posters exposing stereotyped images of each other's countries.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can compare and contrast how people label nationalities and why they do so.</p> <p>I can work with a partner class in the target culture to survey everyone's views toward yet another culture and identify common stereotypes.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can explain how stereotypes influence a country's products or marketing strategies.</p> <p>I can collaborate on an online project to explain misconceptions underlying stereotypes.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can analyze the values reflected in political decisions based on stereotypes.</p> <p>I can post an analysis of and answer questions about campaign rhetoric around immigration and its reliance on stereotyped ideas, adapting my language to neutralize the stereotype.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can evaluate what evidence gave rise to a stereotype in order to demystify it.</p> <p>I can facilitate a formal discussion before a diverse audience on a controversial topic, such as terrorist acts or drug trafficking, without judgment or bias.</p>
<p>INVESTIGATE</p> <p>INTERACT</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can identify some traditional products and show how and why they are globalized such as fast food, jeans or social media.</p> <p>I can share with peers in another culture restaurants and foods that might be familiar to them.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can identify and compare the values that promote globalized products, such as efficiency and comfort.</p> <p>I can exchange information with a peer in another culture about their preferred technology for communicating.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can explain how globalized products impact society and individual lifestyles.</p> <p>I can work with others to determine appropriate supplies to contribute to a disaster relief effort.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can analyze the attitudes toward the environmental impact of globalized products.</p> <p>I can collaborate in international efforts to promote global citizenry.</p>	<p>From my own and other cultures' viewpoints I can evaluate the impact of globalization on economic and political perspectives.</p> <p>I can participate on a panel to discuss countries' actions to address global warming.</p>
<p>INVESTIGATE</p> <p>INTERACT</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can identify social practices such as greetings, introductions, leave-taking and thanking people.</p> <p>I can greet and take leave from someone using polite rehearsed behaviors.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can compare how attitudes toward informality and formality in relationships affect behavior and language.</p> <p>I can use appropriate greeting and leave taking gestures and behaviors in familiar informal and formal situations.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can explain how the role of personal space and topics of conversation influence social interaction.</p> <p>I can greet and take leave from someone using appropriate behaviors in most situations and change an incorrect behavior.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can analyze how the use of sarcasm, irony and humor reflects societal attitudes.</p> <p>I can greet, interact with and take leave from people across cultures in social and professional situations.</p>	<p>In my own and other cultures I can critically interpret, evaluate and mediate verbal and nonverbal behaviors in informal and formal contexts.</p> <p>I can greet, interact with and take leave from people across cultures in diverse situations and mediate others' miscues.</p>

