A discussion of the nature of performance objectives is summarized in this way: "they state (1) what the student will do, (2) under what conditions, (3) to what level of mastery, and (4) using what time limit (if any)." Having established the importance of performance objectives for modern language teachers, the author suggests their specific possible uses. It is urged that teachers write their own performance objectives and develop student evaluation procedures along lines suggested by sample materials. Performance objectives help the teacher in self-evaluation, provide a good basis for curriculum reform, serve as a basis for program articulation, facilitate material and textbook selection, render teacher and supervisor evaluation more objective, and assist in making budgetary allotments. (Author/RL)
Teachers have always set lofty goals for their students. Now performance objectives may identify more clearly the immediate steps in the process of reaching those goals, assuring students and teachers alike that measurable progress is made.

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The purpose of this article is to answer certain basic questions about performance objectives so that teachers may judge whether or not objectives will help them to improve their teaching. Our pedagogical literature is full of references to this movement, and unless one has time to research the various articles, one can become thoroughly confused with the opinions expressed. Let's consider certain basic questions:

What are performance objectives?

They are statements of what the student will be able to do (perform) at the end of a class period, a unit, or a course. They are measurable; that is, they can be evaluated. They are stated in terms of what the student will do, not in terms of what the teacher will do. They provide the expected level of performance. They state under what conditions the student will perform. They give a time limit if any such limit is pertinent.

Let me give an example. At the end of an initial presentation of regular-er verbs in French, the student will perform. They give a time limit if any such limit is pertinent.

To sum up, a performance objective states:
1) what the student will do
2) under what conditions
3) to what level of mastery
4) using what time limit (if any)

What is the difference between performance objectives and behavioral objectives?

Most authors use the terms synonymously since a change in behavior is necessary to produce performance. The proponents of performance objectives insist that the performance be measurable and observable.

Are performance objectives the same as curricular goals?

Not necessarily. Curricular goals are often broad and lofty. They state what the teacher hopes will take place at some time, some place. They may or may not be measurable, and they may or may not occur in the teacher's presence or even in the teacher's lifetime. All courses should be guided by these lofty goals, but these should not be confused with performance objectives.

To give an example: The student will appreciate the culture of Mexico. No one can dispute that this is a worthy goal nor that it should be part of most Spanish programs. Nevertheless, one can only measure appreciation if it is demonstrated. It is difficult to look into the heart of another person. We can, however, ask ourselves how we can provoke this appreciation in students. Do they appreciate that which they do not know? If not, we can construct some objectives that in our opinion will help provoke this appreciation.

For example: The student will give an oral report to the class on dating customs in Mexico. We cannot be sure that this will provoke appreciation; but if we believe that the more a person knows, the more he is likely to appreciate, then we are structuring that which we can control to provoke that which cannot be controlled.

Are performance objectives old or new?

Some authors hail them as a new remedy to age-old problems while others trace with pride the fact that they stem from the ideas of Ralph Tyler and others. Some criticize them as the latest fad or bandwagon that will certainly pass and be forgotten while others denounce them as dragons of the past that are once more rearing their ugly heads.

It seems safe to say that the movement towards performance objectives (Continued on Page 30)
Grading Patterns

Next, ask yourself what percentage of each area the student must achieve to receive a C? Use your normal grading patterns.

Will time be a factor? If so, indicate it. Will students have a dictated twice? Once? With pauses each time? Indicate this.

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Now write your objectives; begin with
1. The student will (during a 40-min-
ette test)
a. Rewrite 15 sentences from pre-
tent to preterite (regular verbs only).
b. Write a one-paragraph guided
composition in the preterite tense.
Material will be taken from the
dialogs.
c. Read a passage in Spanish based
upon the material contained in this
unit and answer 15 multiple-choice
questions.
2. Now set your standards:
a. For a above, how many should
he write correctly?
Twelve out of fifteen? Ten out of
fifteen?
b. For b, how many mistakes can
he make and yet receive a C?
Three? Five? Imagine you are grad-
ing the composition.
c. How many questions does the
student need to answer correctly
for a C? Thirteen? Eight?
Not all objectives are written—Con-
sider
The student will:
d. In a three-minute conference
with the teacher, answer five oral
questions based upon reading ma-
terial.
Criterion: Four out of five correct
in content; no more than four er-
rors in pronunciation.
e. Recite one of the three dialogs
with another student: no notes will
be used (in a five-minute period
with another student). Criterion:
Two errors in content; four errors
in pronunciation.
Your standards of expectancy may
be quite different; you may not wish
to have students recite dialogs. This
is up to you. What you should do, how-
ever, is to make clear to your students
what you do expect.
Give the objectives to the students
at the start of the unit. Then help the
students reach the objectives. Provide
self-tests and check-out points.
After you give the exam, ask the stu-
dents to evaluate your objectives.
Write down their suggestions. Use
them in writing the next unit.
Teach one unit via objectives, then
teach the next one the usual way.
This gives you time to write, time to
prepare and time to think. If you write
two or three units per year, you will
make progress.

In what ways have performance ob-
jectives affected your teaching?
First of all, I was surprised at what
I had been doing in my classes and
what I had been asking of my students.
I began to modify my expectations as
I saw that only a small percentage of
the students actually achieved the ob-
jectives. I then began to teach for
mastery. Setting my expectations
down on paper caused me to revise
them. I decided some were too low,
and I raised them; I found that others
were too high, and I lowered them.
I found important omissions in my
writing objectives for every class
teaches?
Absolutely not. It is advisable for
teachers to work in teams, and no
teacher ought to work on more than
one subject or level at a time. The
objectives should be discussed with
other teachers (and with students)
to determine whether they are rele-
vant and feasible.
Objectives serve as a good means
for articulation between one level and
the next, for instead of arguing about
materials or approaches one can dis-
cuss student performance, namely,
what do we want the kids to be able
to do? Choices of texts and techniques
of teaching fall into place more appro-
priately then.

For what can performance objec-
tives be used?
The following represent only a few
uses:
1. Performance objectives help a
teacher see what he is really doing;
they serve as a "written" videotap:
or mirror.
2. Performance objectives provide a
good basis for curriculum revision.
3. Performance objectives serve as
a basis for articulation among var-
ious levels of instruction.
(Continued on Page 32)
4. Performance objectives serve as a basis for choosing textbooks and other resources.

5. Performance objectives can be used more broadly in teacher and supervisor evaluation. Teachers are then measured in terms of what they do. These objectives should obviously be stated in teacher terms. Example: Does the teacher utilize a wide variety of learning activities in the classroom?

6. Performance objectives can be used in making budgetary allotments. One assigns monies on the basis of the objectives to be achieved. You may have seen references to PPBS, which means "Planned Program Budgeting System."

When did you first find time to write performance objectives?

The same time I am finding to write this article—at home, at night, when I could be watching television or sewing! But I found reward in the process. It even carried over into my personal life, for my 17-year-old daughter announced last Sunday, "Today my performance objectives are: 1) to finish writing my English paper, 2) to clean my room, 3) to get Dad to raise my allowance, and 4) to borrow your car for the day."

I knew I was licked when she achieved all of them, especially when I had to walk home from church.