



# CLOCK

*Classroom Language Observation Checklist Kit*

## User Manual

CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

2015

## I. Purpose of the CLOCK

The CLOCK is a formative assessment tool designed for K-5 STARTALK teachers to periodically assess students' speaking and listening comprehension skills based on observations of students' use of the target language in a classroom setting. Developing proficiency in a language is a process that takes place gradually over time. The amount of progress a student makes over a set period of time depends on many factors, including the type of language program, the extent to which the instructor uses the target language in the classroom, the frequency and length of instruction time, the types of activities teachers provide for students to use the language for real purposes in the classroom, and student motivation. The CLOCK can help teachers track student language growth and inform instruction by documenting student performance during different classroom activities. The CLOCK provides important formative assessment data, but it is not a tool to assign a summative global proficiency level.

## II. Components of the CLOCK

The CLOCK consists of four components to help STARTALK teachers observe their students during class activities and record what they can do. These class activities can include students responding to questions or commands, interacting with classmates, or sharing information. Below is a list of the different components of the CLOCK with corresponding descriptions of their content and purpose, followed by a flow chart that shows the sequence of their use.

### **CLOCK Components**

1. Sample Activities, Set-Up, and Completion
2. Language Samples
3. Sample Completed Checklists and Student Activity Performance Records
4. Checklists and Student Activity Performance Records

***Component 1: Sample Activities, Set-Up, and Completion***

Planning for assessment involves identifying instructional or assessment activities in which students will produce enough language so that teachers can use the checklists to record aspects of their performance. The Sample Activities, Set-Up, and Completion component lists a number of suggested activities teachers can set up in their classrooms to elicit student language and/or check for comprehension. It also includes sample scenarios that describe different steps from preparation to implementation to reporting when using the CLOCK.

***Component 2: Language Samples***

Language samples collected from a variety of STARTALK student programs and in conjunction with other assessment projects illustrate activities described in Component 1. Each sample includes a description of the program context, the instructional/assessment activity and the student's or students' performance level(s).

***Component 3: Sample Completed Checklists and Student Activity Performance Records***

This component contains sample completed checklists (one at the novice level and two at the intermediate level) and two sample completed Student Activity Performance Record forms which align with language samples in Component 2.

***Component 4: Checklists and Student Activity Performance Records***

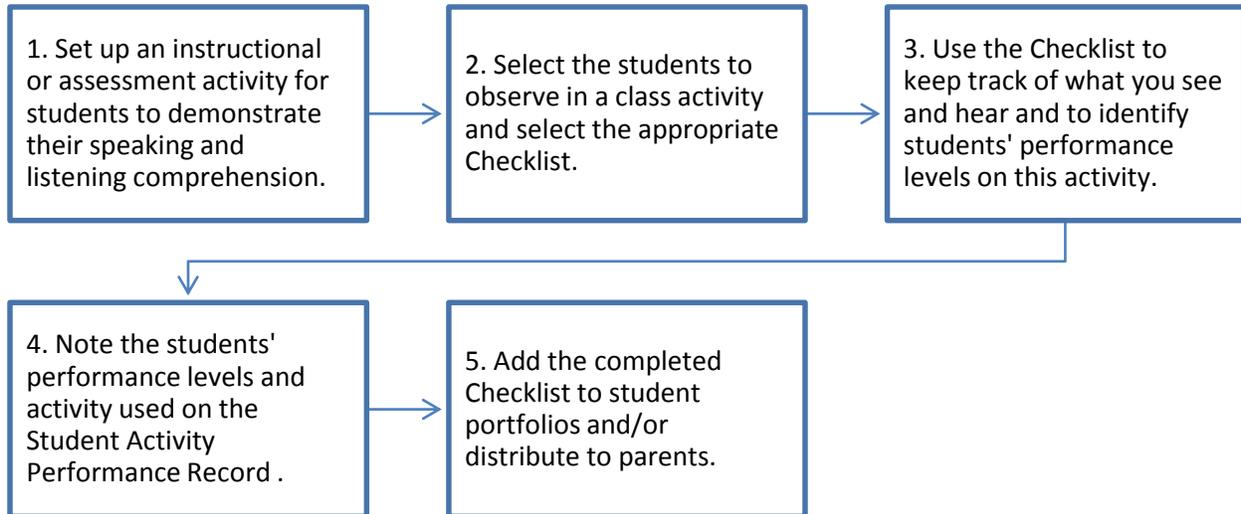
The CLOCK Checklists are tools that teachers will use before, during, and after they observe a student or students to determine the extent to which they are progressing in the language. The checklists are based on the *ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners* (ACTFL 2012), the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Listening* (ACTFL 1999, 1986), the *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* (ACTFL, 2013), the *Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Rating Profile* (CAL, 2010), and *COPE/SOPA Proficiency Assessment Rating Scale* (CAL, 2010). There are two performance checklists: one for Novice and one for Intermediate levels.

The checklists focus on listening comprehension and on speaking skills in terms of fluency, language control, and vocabulary. Listening comprehension refers to what a student understands in the target language. Fluency refers to how a student's language flows as perceived by the listener. Language control refers to how well a student can use the target language. Vocabulary refers to the kinds of words a student knows in the target language. The checklists also provide the option of observing students' use of communication strategies and determining if a students' current performance aligns with lesson specific can-do statements. In addition, this CLOCK component includes contextualized student language samples and checklists to help users better understand the performance levels.

Prior to setting up an activity to assess, teachers need to look over the checklists and determine which one to use (Novice or Intermediate) based on what they have informally observed in class, the background of the student(s), and the nature of the program. Teachers observe students using the target language during activities, fill in the background information at the top of the appropriate checklist, and check off all descriptors that apply across the different performance sublevels and skill areas. At the end of the activity, teachers note the level of performance with the most checked off descriptors. For additional information on performance levels see: <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-performance-descriptors-language-learners>

The Student Activity Performance Records are designed for purposes of data collection or comparison. The Student Activity Performance Records are forms teachers can use to document student performance during interpersonal or presentational activities. There are two types of Student Performance Records, one for an individual student engaged in different activities over time and one to use for a group of students engaged in the same activity. These forms are helpful for tracking students' progress, determining if lesson can-dos have been met, or gathering classroom-based evidence of program effectiveness.

The flow chart below summarizes the steps for using the CLOCK:



### III. Applications of the CLOCK

This tool can be used for several purposes, as illustrated in the table below.

<b>Feedback to parents on student progress</b>	The CLOCK can be used to illustrate a student’s skill level in detail. When teachers send the completed CLOCK checklists home periodically, parents can follow their child’s progress.
<b>Program evaluation</b>	Possible uses of the CLOCK for evaluation include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comparison of performance across grade levels</li> <li>• tracking progress from one week/month/year to the next</li> <li>• adjusting curricula or instructional practices to improve future student performance outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Tracking student progress</b>	The CLOCK can be used to track student progress in their language development over time in both year-long programs and short-term programs (e.g., summer programs) or to target individual students’ needs and identify possible changes in instruction for the student.

#### **IV. Background and CLOCK Development Process**

Since the late 1980s, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has been developing assessments for young language learners. Three of these assessments are the Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA for PreK-2), the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA for 2-8), and the CAL Oral Proficiency Examination (COPE for 6-8). The purpose of these instruments is to determine the highest proficiency levels in speaking and listening comprehension that students can demonstrate during an assessment interview. These assessments are rated using rubrics based on the *ACTFL Oral Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking and Listening* (ACTFL 1999, 1986) and the *ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners* (ACTFL 2012), which define performance in the context of the classroom and the child's developmental level.

As part of the field testing of the ELLOPA and SOPA, teachers were asked to rate their students' oral proficiency as seen in the classroom at the end of the school year. Adapted forms of either the ELLOPA Rating Profile or the COPE/SOPA Rating Scale were provided to the teachers for gathering information as they observed their students' classroom performance. These observation forms were designed to include the sublevel descriptors from the rubrics and fields for entering the student's name, school, date of observation, and notes. The teachers were asked to read the proficiency level descriptions and circle the sublevels that best described the language a student was using when observed in the classroom. This adaptation of the rating rubrics resulted in the Teacher Observation Matrix-SOPA or TOM-SOPA. A toolkit was designed to show teachers how to use the TOM-SOPA. Generally, the TOM-SOPA is most useful for teachers who have a background in the ELLOPA/SOPA and/or training in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, and/or who teach in year-round, articulated programs.

In addition to developing summative and formative oral proficiency assessments, CAL has provided annual assessment training for teachers and administrators of STARTALK programs since 2008. During this process CAL has become familiar with the challenges of assessing students in STARTALK language programs, which are typically short in duration. In October 2013, CAL applied for a STARTALK infrastructure grant to develop a classroom-based

formative assessment tool specifically addressing the needs of teachers in STARTALK language programs. The grant to develop the CLOCK was awarded in April 2014. The CLOCK development process included:

- reviewing the literature on assessment practices and needs in K-5 language programs, coupled with CAL's experience in developing language assessments, which provided the basis for the content and processes included in the CLOCK;
- observing K-5 classrooms in STARTALK Chinese summer and extension programs locally and regionally;
- drafting and piloting different versions of the checklists;
- drafting the other components of the CLOCK;
- gathering feedback from administrators and teachers in Chinese and other STARTALK language programs;
- analyzing feedback and finalizing all components;
- sending the completed CLOCK to STARTALK for distribution on February 28, 2015.