Proficiency-Level Targeted
Student Engagement Strategies in the Language Classroom
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Student engagement
- Is the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show.
- Includes motivation to learn. (The Glossary of Education Reform)

All language-learning outcomes must be considered when selecting or developing student engagement strategies. The outcomes include:
- Content (topics)
- Communicative Modes
  - Interpersonal (person-to-person)
  - Presentational (speaking and writing)
  - Interpretive (listening and reading)
- Cultures (of the language users)
- Structures (grammar)
- Settings (situations for language use) (from World Language Content Standards for California Public Schools, 2009, and NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, 2013)

Student engagement strategies should employ a proficiency-oriented perspective. They should:
- Match students' proficiency levels and ages.
- Use topics and settings that are interesting for students.
- Provide opportunities for students to work with every other person in class (eventually).
- Give opportunities for students to use the language frequently and repeatedly...and in different ways.

Examples of Student Engagement Strategies that Can Be Tailored to the Specific Content, Modes, Cultures, Structures, and Settings of Language Students at Particular Proficiency Levels
- Magnetic Art*: Post artworks or other prompts around the room; have students circulate, make choices, and discuss prompts that are appropriate for their proficiency levels.
- Up and Out*: Devise a structure to have students get up and out of their seats to discuss prompts with varied partners. Examples include:
  - Artist Trading Card sessions
  - Partner sign-ups
  - Stand up, hand up, pair up
  - Four corners
  - Note-checking pairs
  - Inside-outside circles
- Video Production*: Structure tasks appropriate for students' proficiency levels and the target culture and content. Have students work in small groups to make brief (e.g., 2-minute) videos. Students can record on cell phone cameras or dedicated cameras such as Flip cameras.

Summary
- Student engagement = interest and motivation expended to learn
- It's in our hands!
- By choosing and using a variety of engagement strategies, we can:
  - Provide authentic contexts
  - Keep students in the target language at their proficiency level
  - Build community
  - Enhance interest, fun, and learning