
What's the difference between learning outcomes and objectives?

Outcomes describe the end-result of a credential, program, activity, or service. Outcomes are normally too broad to be measured all at once, so objectives are used to define measurable aspects of the outcome that can be assessed.

Objectives are measurable statements of specific milestones results to be achieved *en route* to the accomplishment of an outcome; objectives state results, not activities. Objectives are used to describe measurable aspects of an outcome which, when met, would constitute evidence of or partial achievement of the outcome.

Tips for writing objectives:

- One way to identify measurable objectives for a given outcome is to identify a narrow **context** or **setting** in which proficiency will be demonstrated.
- Another approach is to identify specific measurable **aspects** of the outcome which, if met, would represent partial achievement of the outcome.

Examples:

Outcome: Foreign languages graduates with teacher certification are competent in foreign language pedagogy.

Possible objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to make the target language comprehensible to students under controlled conditions (e.g. microteaching or MTTC) (a specific aspect of competency)
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to make the target language comprehensible to children in authentic classroom conditions (e.g., student teaching) (same aspect, different context)
3. Students will facilitate whole-class discussions in the target language among students in a classroom setting (a different aspect)
4. Students will demonstrate competence in planning foreign language lessons that actively engage learners (another aspect)
5. Students will demonstrate competence in accurately evaluating children's oral proficiency in the target language (another aspect)