

How do I **create** a sentence builder?

1. First, remember your **target performance level** (Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid+)
2. Identify **specific communicative function** (describe, compare, narrate, ...) and **topic**
3. **Choose one or more sentences based on the communicative functions** required for real world communication on the topic
4. Identify the **components of the sentence** (mandatory & optional)
5. Identify **language** (lexico-grammar = words, chunks, structures), with attention to what you can recycle and what seeds you might plant (spiraling prior and future learning)
 - Consider whether the recycled chunks need pinyin support or not (depends on student performance)
6. (optional) create **different levels of scaffolding** (pinyin and English, English no pinyin, only 汉字) if desired
7. **Note: This is grammar in context!** the **grammar** fits in around the chosen language in a way which **facilitates the communication**, and not vice-versa

(i.e. **NOT deciding the grammar and making the content fit – or worse still just grammar in a total vacuum**)

Ex.

Describing the content (furniture, etc.) in my living space

1. **target performance level:** Novice High+ (Sentences)
2. **specific communicative function** (describe, compare, narrate, ...) and **topic** ✓
3. **sentence** required for real world communication: **There are 3 large bedrooms in the apartment.**
4. **components of the sentence** (mandatory & optional)
 1. (modifier) location+ preposition + (does not)have + (adjectives, quantities, colors, etc.) noun phrase
5. **language** (lexico-grammar = words, chunks, structures)
 1. **Recycling:** furniture, adjectives, (selected) classifiers, adjectives, both... and...
 2. **Expanding:** colors
 3. **Plant seed:** -looking, what appears to be...
 4. **Bonus challenge (for high flyers):** verb phrase descriptions, new quantity words

Attention

- Don't over-do it with content: start with one template / model sentence and question, then expand
 - The students need time to learn how to use the resources
- Keep their proficiency in mind: don't push novices too hard, don't limit intermediates to single discrete simple sentences!
- Re-use Functions with different content and language across functions: reduce (cognitive load), reuse and recycle previous learning, plant seeds for future language features and constructions!