Designation: ~~F1562 – 14~~ F1562 – 23

Standard Guide for
Use-Oriented Foreign Language Instruction[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1562; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide covers identification of the components of a quality language instructional program and establishes criteria for each component. This guide is meant to provide criteria for the minimum standard for a program designed to attain specified language proficiency goals.

1.2 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*[2]
F3130 Practice for Language Service Companies

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *asynchronous learning*—learning in which communication exchanges between instructors or learners, or both, occur with a short or long time delay. Learners can access the information transmitted from one person to another at any time. Exchanges may occur via email, blogs, message boards, podcasts, etc.

3.1.2 *authentic language material*—material produced by native speakers for native speakers for nonlanguage training purposes.

3.1.3 *blended learning*—an instructional approach designed to optimize learning outcomes. It is an integrated approach that combines to varying degrees face-to-face instructor-facilitated learning with e-learning activities and resources that allow some level of student control over time, place, path, or pace, or a combination thereof, of learning.

3.1.4 *class(room) hour*—50 min of instruction plus a 10-min break.

3.1.5 *client*—the individual or organization that engages the services of a language training institution.

3.1.6 *computer-adaptive software*—software that presents materials on the base of demonstrated mastery of previous material.

---

[1] This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F43 on Language Services and Products and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F43.02 on Foreign Language Instruction.
Current edition approved ~~Jan. 15, 2014~~Nov. 1, 2023. Published ~~March 2014~~December 2023. Originally approved in 1995. Last previous edition approved in ~~2005~~2014 as ~~F1562 – 95 (2005).~~F1562 – 14. DOI: ~~10.1520/F1562-14.~~10.1520/F1562-23.
[2] For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

3.1.7 *corpus (plural corpora)*—a collection of naturally occurring language samples compiled as written texts or as a transcription of recorded speech stored electronically.

3.1.8 *concordance*—a listing of each occurrence of a word, phrase, expression or pattern in corpus, presented with the contexts in which they appear.

3.1.9 *curriculum plan*—a plan that serves as a framework for the design and implementation of instruction.

3.1.10 *e-learning (electronic learning)*—a learning platform that includes all forms of electronically supported, computer- and network-enabled learning and teaching. E-learning applications and processes include ~~Web-based~~web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual education opportunities and digital collaboration. Content is delivered via the Internet, intranet/extranet, audio or video, satellite TV, and CD-ROM. It can be self-paced or instructor-led and includes media in the form of text, image, animation, streaming video, and audio.[3]

3.1.11 *fluency, n*—the ability to speak or write a language easily, well, and quickly.

3.1.12 *formative assessment*—a range of formal and informal assessment procedures employed during the learning process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student attainment.[4]

3.1.13 *institution*—the organization that provides language training.

3.1.14 *intensive*—at least 4 h per day, 5 days per week.

3.1.15 *Learning Management System (LMS)*—a technology platform through which students access online learning materials and courses. An LMS generally includes software for creating and editing course content, communication tools, assessment tools, and other features for managing the course and tracking student progress.[5]

3.1.16 *learning resources*—those materials and other sources of learning that are used in a language program, such as books, software, ~~Web~~web content, etc.

3.1.17 *physical classroom, n*—a brick-and-mortar traditional classroom.

3.1.18 *proficiency*—ability to use language skill(s).

3.1.19 *program*—a system of instruction.

3.1.20 *progress*—change in language skill(s) over time.

3.1.21 *quality*—consistent in meeting or exceeding client expectations.

3.1.22 *skill modalities*—the four receptive and productive language use skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

3.1.23 *social media*—web- and mobile-based technologies that facilitate communication within and among networks of individuals.

3.1.24 *syllabus (also curriculum)*—a description of the content of the course of instruction and the order in which elements of the course are to be taught.

---

[3] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-learning.

[4] Huhta, Ari, "Diagnostic and Formative Assessment," in Spolsky, Bernard, and Hult, F. M., *The Handbook of Educational Linguistics*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2010, pp. 469–482.

[5] Northwest Educational Technology Consortium, in iNACOL at http://www.inacol.org/research/docs/iNACOL_DefinitionsProject.pdf, 2005.

3.1.25 *use-oriented instruction*—language instruction that prepares learners to use the language to carry out real-world communicative tasks.

3.1.26 *virtual classroom, n*—an online learning environment that can be web-based and accessed through a portal or software-based and require downloadable executable file.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide is intended to serve institutions for the development of instructional programs as well as to serve potential clients and students in the selection of a training program to meet their needs.

4.2 It may not be possible for a specific program to meet all of the components of the standard for every language. If the standard cannot be met for a given language, the institution will clearly inform the client and the student of that fact.

4.3 The following components are addressed:

4.3.1 *Needs Analysis*—Assists clients and training institutions in determining language needs, setting reasonable objectives and expectations, and selecting appropriate training programs.

4.3.2 *Describing Levels of Language Proficiency*—Assists students, clients, instructors, and institutions in assessing needs, setting realistic goals, and charting progress toward those goals.

4.3.3 *Explicitness and Reasonableness of Language Outcome Expectations*—Assists in determining an individual's need for training to increase proficiency. Determines the estimated number of classroom hours required to meet an identified proficiency objective. Assists in determining the suitability of an institution to provide appropriate instruction.

4.3.3.1 These guidelines are not intended to be absolute. Individual cases may be influenced by a number of factors, including: individual language learning ability, prior language experience, native language, attendance, motivation, homework, exposure and reinforcement outside the classroom, and individual learning style.

4.3.4 *Training Program Criteria*—Assists students, clients, and institutions in identifying and establishing a use-oriented training program.

4.3.5 *Establishing Criteria for Language Instructors*—Assists in recruiting, selecting, and retaining instructors.

4.3.6 *Supervision of Instructors*—Emphasizes the importance of the supervisory role that may be performed by one or more individuals. Assists institutions in establishing supervisory procedures and gives guidelines to clients for evaluating a training program to meet their needs.

4.3.7 *Evaluating Student Progress in Language Proficiency Terms*—Establishes minimum requirements for evaluating and documenting student progress in terms of language proficiency for the benefit of clients, students, institutions, and instructors.

4.3.8 *Guides for Institutional Stability*—Provides clients with criteria by which to determine the stability of an institution.

4.3.9 *Advertising and Promotional Activities*—Assists institutions in preparing advertising and promotional materials and assists clients in interpreting and understanding such advertising and materials.

4.3.9.1 These guidelines shall apply to advertising, such as print, broadcasting, and electronic media, as well as oral presentations.

5. Needs Analysis

5.1 *Procedure:*

5.1.1 Determine how the prospective student will use the target language by conducting a language audit that addresses the following:

5.1.1.1 Language skill modalities needed (listening, speaking, reading, and writing),

5.1.1.2 Communicative tasks to be accomplished (for example, asking for directions, closing a deal, or ordering a meal),

5.1.1.3 Conditions under which language is to be used (with whom, where, how, and why), and

5.1.1.4 Kind of language needed (standard, academic, technical, regional, street slang, colloquial, dialect, and register).

5.2 Consider individual learning style, aptitude, and potential disabilities of a learner.

5.3 Determine the student's current level of proficiency in any relevant language skills by such means as an oral proficiency interview, a writing sample, or a self-evaluation check list.

5.4 Determine the proficiency level(s) that are needed to meet the student's language needs. Refer to ~~sections~~Section 6 on Describing Levels of Language Proficiency and Section 7 on Language Outcome Expectations.

5.5 Describe appropriate training options (for example, in the areas of scheduling, class size, curriculum, methodology, modes of delivery, and cost).

5.6 Agree on objectives and training program.

6. Describing Levels of Language Proficiency

6.1 *Skills:* Language proficiency is defined as a learner's ability to use language in spontaneous and unrehearsed contexts that mirror real-life situations.[6] By contrast, language fluency is the ability to speak or write easily and smoothly at a given proficiency level.

5.1.1 *Listening Skills*—See Table 1.

5.1.2 *Speaking Skills*—See Table 2.

5.1.3 *Reading Skills*—See Table 3.

5.1.4 *Writing Skills*—See Table 4.

6.2 Language proficiency scales have been developed to assign a numerical value to levels of language proficiency. No one scale is superior to another. A consumer must consider the audience for which the scale was developed in determining whether or not the particular scale it appropriate for use.

6.2.1 The most common scales used to define language proficiency are the following:

6.2.1.1 *Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptors.* The ILR Scale was developed by an inter-agency committed of the US Government as a means to inventory language ability in federal government positions. The ILR Scale characterizes language use on a 0-5 scale. Each higher level implies control of the previous levels' functions and accuracy. The designation 0+, 1+, 2+, etc. will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next level. The "plus-level" descriptions, therefore, are subsidiary to the "base-level" descriptions.[7]

6.2.1.2 *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines.* The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were published as an adaptation of the ILR Scale for the academic community and is used to assess functional language ability in academic and workplace settings. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are a description of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context.

---

[6] The ~~examples included in this guide are not exhaustive and do not reflect any endorsement.~~ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines can be found at https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf.

[7] The ~~examples included in this guide are not exhaustive and do not reflect any endorsement.~~ILR Scale skill level descriptors can be found at https://www.govtilr.org/Skills/ILRscale2.htm.

For each skill, these guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are subdivided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The levels of the ACTFL Guidelines describe the continuum of proficiency from that of the highly articulate, well-educated language user to a level of little or no functional ability.[6]

6.2.1.3 *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).* The CEFR was designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabi and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency. It is used in Europe and other continents. The CEFR describes foreign language proficiency at six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) and three "plus" levels (A2+, B1+, B2+). The CEFR's illustrative scales of "can do" descriptors are available in a bank of descriptors.[8]

7. Explicitness and Reasonableness of Outcome Expectations

7.1 See Table ~~5~~1 for explicitness and reasonableness of outcome expectations guidelines.

8. Training Program Criteria

8.1 Every use-oriented language training program should include:

8.1.1 A curriculum plan that:

8.1.1.1 Is clearly written, consistent with and adapted to the results of the client's Needs Analysis (See Component 4),

8.1.1.2 Contains clearly defined and measurable learning objectives,

8.1.1.3 Includes a syllabus that is consistent with learning outcomes and specifies a time frame for the program,

8.1.1.4 Includes a ~~Statement of Student Responsibilities~~statement of student responsibilities which:
 (1) Is delivered to and discussed with learners at the beginning of the program, and
 (2) Outlines learners' expected commitment and responsibilities, such as:
  (a) Active participation in his/her learning and assessment,

TABLE ~~5~~1 Classroom Hours to Achieve Proficiency Levels, by Language Difficulty[A,B,C]

From S/L/R-0[D] to:	S/L/R-1	S/L/R-2	S/R/L-3	S/L/R-4
I. Romance and Germanic Languages French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian Romanian, German Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish	150	400	650	[E]
II. Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean	350	1100	2200	[E]
III. Other Languages[F] for example, Russian, East European, African, Other Asian languages, etc.	250	600	1100	[E]

[A] Hours approximate. Actual hours required may vary according to student's language learning aptitude.
[B] For learners to achieve these goals, classroom study should be supplemented by a minimum of 2 to 3 h of preparation for each five classroom hours.
[C] This table is an adaptation of the U.S. State Department Foreign Service Institute's expected levels of speaking proficiency for various lengths of training. This adaptation is intended to meet the needs of private sector students.
[D] S = speaking proficiency, L = listening proficiency, and R = reading proficiency.
[E] Generally cannot be achieved in classroom. Requires extensive use of language in the native setting.
[F] Indonesian, Malay approximate classroom hours: for S/L/R-1: 200; S/L/R-2: 550; S/L/R-3: 900.

[8] The ~~examples included in this guide are not exhaustive and do not reflect any endorsement.~~CEFR can be found at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre1_en.asp.

(b) Completion of required tasks, within class and outside of class, to meet his/her learning objectives, and

(c) Timely feedback to the teacher and program of any difficulties the learner is experiencing or questions or concerns s/he may have so that the program may adapt the course as necessary to meet the learning needs and ~~objectives,~~objectives.

8.1.1.5 Includes continuous formative assessment of student progress (See Component 10),

8.1.1.6 Is flexible, comprehensible, and accessible to all stakeholders,

8.1.1.7 Is reviewed and assessed regularly by the language program management, the requesting agency and the learner(s), and revised as necessary, and

8.1.1.8 Includes a summative evaluation that meets the requirements for evaluation, see, Component 10.1 to be administered at the end of the training program and at any other times requested by the client.

8.1.2 Learning materials that:

8.1.2.1 Are professionally developed and reflect current knowledge about instructional practices for foreign language teaching and learning,

8.1.2.2 Are user-friendly for both learner and instructor,

8.1.2.3 Are appropriate to the learner's proficiency in the language,

8.1.2.4 Are appropriate to the learner's learning objectives ~~(See~~(see Component 4),

8.1.2.5 Reflect current authentic language use in cultural contexts, and

8.1.2.6 Include materials for independent study and group work outside of class.

8.1.3 Learning resources ~~that are, to the extent possible, accessible digitally (for example, the internet) and from any place and at any time, and include the following:~~that:

8.1.3.1 Are accessible digitally from any place and at any time, and include:

8.1.3.2 Audio and video recordings of examples of language use,

8.1.3.3 Basic reference materials, such as bilingual and monolingual dictionaries,

8.1.3.4 Current authentic materials and realia including relevant periodicals and ~~other~~ documents, signs, maps, broadcasts, films, etc., and

8.1.3.5 Tools that support synchronous and asynchronous interaction ~~at a distance through real-time communication platforms (for example, Skype, FaceTime or Google Hangouts), Social Media (for example, FaceBook, Google +, Twitter, YouTube or Pinterest); Learning Management Systems (for example, Blackboard, Moodle, Sakai).~~using virtual online communication platforms, social media, and learning management systems.

8.1.4 A learning-centered instructional methodology ~~that is based on established "best practices" and:~~that:

8.1.4.1 Is based on established foreign language teaching and learning best practices,

8.1.4.2 Incorporates e-learning activities and teacher-facilitated learning in a blended learning approach (see ~~2.1.3~~3.1.3),

8.1.4.3 Is appropriate to individual student needs as determined by the Needs Analysis and ongoing formative assessment, and

8.1.4.4 Can be explained as necessary to the learner and client ~~organization.~~organization, and

8.1.4.5 Incorporates procedures for evaluation of learning during the training program and at the conclusion of the training program.