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Language resource management — Controlled human communication (CHC) —

Part 4: Basic principles and methodology for stylistic guidelines (BSG)

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Gestion des ressources linguistiques — Communication humaine contrôlée (CHC) —

Partie 4: Principes de base et méthodologie pour les lignes directrices stylistiques

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Foreword

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Introduction

It can be generally understood that English has evolved into the representative international common language, i.e. lingua franca. When browsing the internet, people can find many English sites. According to an estimation made by W3Techs in 2022[6], English is used by 60,4 % of all the websites whose content language is known. ASD-STE100[3], one of the representative controlled English rule sets, has been downloaded by 71 % non-English-native-speaking countries compared with 29 % English-speaking countries[4]. This is natural considering communication methods with other countries. Currently, people generally communicate with other people in non-English speaking countries by using English via the internet, email and social media. Therefore, it is necessary to make the communication tool (i.e. English) more understandable and translatable. This document provides guidelines for non-native English speakers to write English in an easy-to-understand manner, not just native English speakers.

At the same time, almost one-third of internet sites (39,6 %) are written in languages other than English according to the W3Techs report[6]. People should use plain, concise and understandable language because so many of their counterparts are not good at English and stick to their own language. By making the language as plain as possible, these counterparts will be able to understand it, and they will be able to apply it to machine translation. As a result, people can find that they need two languages: English and their own language. In order to facilitate communication worldwide, it is necessary for people to make English and their own language plain, comprehensible and easily translatable, i.e. to make languages bi-directionally accessible.

In addition, in some countries, there is an active movement to improve the language itself so that it can be communicated in an easy-to-understand and non-misunderstood manner in order to promote communication. Typical examples are plain languages[5] and ASD-STE100[3]. Both have a long history, especially ASD-STE100[3], which was first released in 1983. In addition, plain languages have evolved into the languages of various countries, not just English. In the future, it could be helpful to have writing rules that cover both plain languages and ASD-STE100[3] across the board.

It is possible that the writing rules of this document overlap with the rules of plain languages and controlled languages (such as ASD-STE100[3]), but it also includes other detailed rules. This is to be able to address various languages in detail. The writing rules are not based solely on one language, as is the traditional practice, but instead by comparing English with a linguistically different language such as Japanese.

Writing using this document can facilitate communication around the world by writing original text that is easy for the readers to understand and by improving the quality of machine-translated output text.

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Language resource management — Controlled human communication (CHC) —

Part 4: Basic principles and methodology for stylistic guidelines (BSG)

1 Scope

This document establishes a set of basic writing rules, called "basic principles and methodology for stylistic guidelines (BSG)", for writing in English that can be applied to other languages, facilitating communication in each language and from a language to other languages. It includes conceptual writing rules as well as specific grammar ones.

This document is designed to facilitate written communication in English for native and non-native English speakers. It allows English native and non-English native speakers to smoothly communicate through social media or email using English, or to translate into their local language. Furthermore, this document is applicable to the languages of each community. In other words, it aims to promote bi-directional communication between two particular languages.

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2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

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3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
basic principles and methodology for stylistic guidelines
BSG
guidelines specifying common writing rules applicable to many languages

3.2
technical communication
process of defining and creating information for use to be delivered as information products for the safe, effective, and efficient use of a supported product throughout its life cycle

[SOURCE: ISO 24183:—[1)], 3.1.1, modified — Notes 1 to 3 to entry deleted.]

3.3
plain language
communication in which wording, structure and design are so clear that the intended readers can easily

— find what they need,

1) Under preparation. Stage at the time of publication: ISO/DIS 24183:2022.

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— understand what they find, and

— use that information

[SOURCE: ISO 24495-1:2023, 3.1]

3.4
controlled language
language restricting the grammar and vocabulary used, to reduce ambiguity and complexity and to help people to understand the content

3.5
keyword
word or phrase used to describe the main content (nouns and verbs) of a document in a consistent manner

3.6
part of speech
category to which a word is classified according to each syntactic function

EXAMPLE Noun, verb, adjective.

3.7
internationalization
process of generalizing a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions without the need for re-design

Note 1 to entry: Internationalization takes place at the level of programme design and document development.

[SOURCE: Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA)[7]]

3.8
localization
process of taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold

Note 1 to entry: The term derives from “locale”: a place where something particular happens or is done. Translation (T9n) is one of the activities in localization.

[SOURCE: Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA)[7]]

4 Principle

Since there are many common factors and rules among languages, it is possible to create a set of writing rules that is applicable to many different languages.

5 Methodology — How to apply the rules

The task of simplifying language can be divided into two groups: sentences and words. Sentences are involved in syntactic and grammatical issues, which can be applicable to all languages. On the other hand, since words (or vocabulary) heavily depend on the language of each country, it is difficult to find and apply common rules.

The BSG given in this document concentrate on simplifying language by sentences, including clauses and phrases. Any difficulties related to writing sentences can be solved by applying the 3C rules in technical writing and technical communication: clear, correct and concise:

— clearly showing the sentence structure and not making the structure complicated;

— writing in statements of fact, and distinguishing between facts and opinions;

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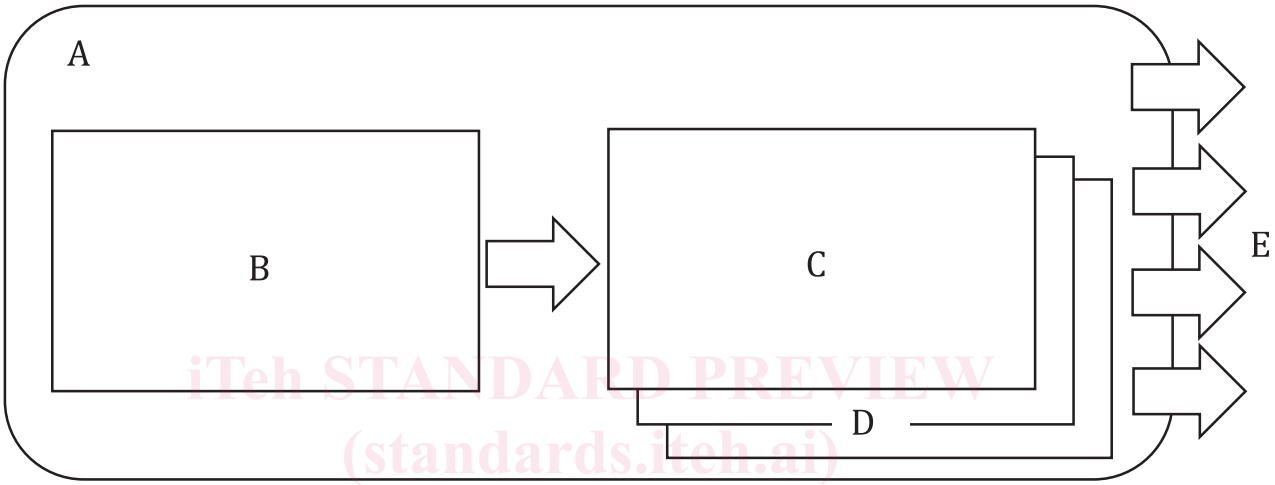
— giving simple and concise expressions.

The 3C rules are applicable to any language, and are used in many writing guidelines for plain languages and controlled languages.

BSG in one language can be created immediately by applying this English version to that language. Some grammatical or syntactic ingenuity can be required.

6 Steps to create the stylistic guidelines (BSG)

There are two necessary phases to complete BSG: internationalization and localization. Figure 1 shows and explains the relation of the two concepts.



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Key

A globalization (G11n)
B internationalization (I18n) or generalization
C localization (L10n)
D translation (T9n)
E simultaneous shipment

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Figure 1 — Terms used in globalization

Based on the BSG rules (in English), create language rules corresponding to each of the English rules. To do this, an idea of internationalization is necessary to find similarities in languages to make them more generalized, rather than finding differences.

After internationalization, the production stage moves to the language-specific matters: localization. A dictionary specific to the language selected, including the approved words and deprecated words, can be necessary ("vocabulary control"). The dictionary should be created for each language to make effective use of this rule set. However, creating a dictionary is not mandatory. If it is too time-consuming to create a dictionary, starting with just the writing rules is possible.

7 Stylistic guidelines rules (BSG)

7.1 Types of rules

This clause provides the 55 BSG rules, which comprise 8 sentence-length rules (see 7.2), 8 paragraph rules (see 7.3), 14 construction rules (see 7.4), 6 modification rules (see 7.5), 12 vocabulary rules (see 7.6) and 7 other rules (see 7.7).

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7.2 Sentence length

7.2.1 BSG Rule 1.1: Write in short and concise sentences.

EXAMPLE

No: When the Control application of the inspection system is started up, the IS screen is displayed for checking and setting the data necessary for detailed inspection, such as program, default values and functions. (33 words)

Yes: When you start the Control application of the inspection system, the IS screen is displayed. (15 words) You can use the IS screen to check and set the data necessary for detailed inspection, such as program, default values and functions. (23 words)

NOTE See Rule 1.2 (7.2.2) for identifying essential information. See Rule 3.13 (7.4.3) for the order of sentences.

7.2.2 BSG Rule 1.2: Divide essential information from ancillary information. Write the essential information first.

EXAMPLE

No: The research laboratory, located in the ancient capital city of Nara in Japan and famous for its unique management policy, has developed a device with a self-diagnosis function, usually seen in the neural medication field, which has gradually been increasing its presence. (42 words)

Yes: The research laboratory has developed a device with a self-diagnosis function. (11 words) The function is usually seen in the neural medication field, which has gradually been increasing its presence. (17 words) The laboratory is located in the ancient capital city of Nara in Japan and is famous for its unique management policy. (21 words)

The information enclosed by commas (underlined text) in the "No" sentence in the Example is ancillary, not-essential information. Place the ancillary information in separate sentences after the sentence with the essential information.

NOTE See Rule 3.13 (7.4.3) for the order of sentences.

7.2.3 BSG Rule 1.3: Divide a compound sentence that does not share subjects and predicates.

EXAMPLE

No: Press the SHIFT button and then the device automatically detects the difference.

Yes: Press the SHIFT button. The device automatically detects the difference.

7.2.4 BSG Rule 1.4: Divide a sentence with complicated nested constructions into simple sentences with a clear structure.

EXAMPLE

No: When the linkage is complete, the inner domain is recorded if the operation is in the Lock mode.

Yes: The operation is engaged in the Lock mode. When the linkage is complete, the inner domain is recorded.

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7.2.5 BSG Rule 1.5: Separate overlong modification(s).

EXAMPLE

No: ABC research laboratory has developed a device with a self-diagnosis function, usually seen in the neural medication field, which has gradually been increasing its presence. (25 words)

Yes: ABC research laboratory has developed a device. The device has a self-diagnosis function, and it is usually seen in the neural medication field, which has gradually been increasing its presence.

7.2.6 BSG Rule 1.6: Separate a lengthy adnominal (attributive) clause from the subject.

EXAMPLE

No: The intranet Q&A site that facilitates knowledge sharing and communication among employees has been established.

Yes: The intranet Q&A site has been established. The site facilitates knowledge sharing and communication among employees.

We have established the intranet Q&A site.

7.2.7 BSG Rule 1.7: Use a complete sentence to introduce lists.

EXAMPLE

No: In addition to invoking, managing, and scrolling windows, the windowing environment can

— customize windows,

— manage libraries and files, and

— search text.

Yes: In addition to invoking, managing, and scrolling windows, the windowing environment can be used as follows:

— to customize windows;

— to manage libraries and files;

— to search text.

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7.2.8 BSG Rule 1.8: Avoid interruptions in the middle of a sentence.

EXAMPLE

No: To automatically define a libref each time SAS starts, add

```
libname _saswa <location-of-your-knowledge-base>;
```

to your autoexec.sas file.

Yes: To automatically define a libref each time SAS starts, add the following statement to your autoexec.sas file:

```
libname _saswa <location-of-your-knowledge-base>;
```

SOURCE: Reference [8].

7.3 Paragraph

7.3.1 BSG Rule 2.1: Destructure a long sentence into a group of short sentences. Use 20 words for an instruction and 25 words for a description.

EXAMPLE 1

No: If you want to set up an ideal environment during an example creation operation, especially a graphic example creation operation, or a file editing operation, especially graphic file editing operation, or a data saving operation, especially graphic data saving operation, click “Environment” twice to execute the generation. (47 words)

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