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

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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.

2. Terminology

2.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

2.1.1 *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.

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

2.1.3 *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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.1.10 *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 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.[2]

2.1.11 *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.[3]

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

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

2.1.14 *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.[4]

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

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

2.1.17 *program*—a system of instruction.

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

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

2.1.20 ~~*student*~~ *skill modalities*—the ~~one who studies the language.~~four receptive and productive language use skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

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

2.1.22 *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.

2.1.23 *use-oriented instruction*—language instruction ~~directed at satisfying the communication needs of the students.~~that prepares learners to use the language to carry out real-world communicative tasks.

3. Significance and Use

3.1 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 The following components are addressed:

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

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

3.3.3 *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.

3.3.3.1 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.

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

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

3.3.6 *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.

3.3.7 *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.

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

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

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

4. Needs Analysis

4.1 *Procedure:*

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

4.1.1.1 Language ~~skills~~ skill modalities needed (listening, speaking, reading, and writing),

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

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

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

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

4.3 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.

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

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

4.6 Agree on objectives and training program.

5. Describing Levels of Language Proficiency

5.1 *Skills:*

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. Explicitness and Reasonableness of Outcome Expectations

6.1 See Table 5 for explicitness and reasonableness of outcome expectations guidelines.

7. Training Program Criteria

7.1 Every use-oriented language training program should ~~include the following:~~include:

7.1.1 A curriculum plan that:

7.1.1.1 Is ~~designed to meet the needs of the client,~~clearly written, consistent with and adapted to the results of the client's Needs Analysis (See Component 4),

7.1.1.2 Contains clearly defined and measurable learning objectives,

7.1.1.3 ~~Is made clear to the student,~~Includes a syllabus that is consistent with learning outcomes and specifies a time frame for the program,

7.1.1.4 ~~Is responsive to feedback from the client or student, or both, and~~Includes a Statement of Student Responsibilities which:

(1) Is delivered to and discussed with learners at the beginning of the program,

(2) Outlines learners' expected commitment and responsibilities, such as:

(a) Active participation in his/her learning and assessment,

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

(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,

7.1.1.5 Includes ~~frequent and ongoing formative evaluation.~~continuous formative assessment of student progress (See Component 10),

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

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

7.1.1.8 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.

7.1.2 ~~Instructional~~Learning materials that:

7.1.2.1 Are professionally ~~developed,~~developed and reflect current knowledge about instructional practices for foreign language learning,

7.1.2.2 Are ~~user-friendly,~~user-friendly for both learner and instructor,

7.1.2.3 Are ~~determined by the institution to be~~ appropriate to the ~~student's skill level~~ learner's proficiency in the language,

7.1.2.4 Are appropriate to the learner's learning objectives (See Component 4),

7.1.2.5 ~~Include authentic language materials from countries where the target language is spoken,~~ Reflect current authentic language use in cultural contexts, and

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

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

TABLE 1 Levels of Listening Proficiency[A]

Level	Description
~~0~~	~~No Proficiency~~
~~0+~~	~~Survival Proficiency~~
	~~Able to understand short phrases based on memorized material.~~ ~~Slightly longer phrases must be repeated and include frequent~~ ~~pauses to be understood.~~
~~1~~	~~Minimal Functional Proficiency~~
	~~Able to understand very simple statements, questions, and face-to-~~ ~~face conversations concerning some familiar situations and many~~ ~~basic needs. Repetition and slower speech are necessary for~~ ~~understanding.~~
~~2~~	~~Limited Functional Proficiency~~
	~~Able to understand most routine conversations spoken at a normal~~ ~~pace relating to social and occupational situations. Some difficulty~~ ~~understanding common structures and vocabulary remains;~~ ~~occasional repetition is still needed.~~
~~3~~	~~General Functional Proficiency~~
	~~Able to understand almost all conversations spoken at a normal~~ ~~pace without repetitions, including discussions within the individual's~~ ~~occupation; readily understands phone conversations and~~ ~~broadcasts, but still experiences some difficulty with very fast~~ ~~speech, slang, and cultural references.~~
~~4~~	~~Full Functional Proficiency~~
	~~Able to understand all discussions, no matter how complex, within~~ ~~the listener's experience; able to understand most cultural~~ ~~references as well as manipulations of the language including~~ ~~persuasion, negotiation, conjecture, and humor.~~
~~5~~	~~Educated Native Proficiency~~

TABLE 1 Levels of Listening Proficiency[A]

Level	Description
0	No Proficiency
0+	Survival Proficiency
	Able to understand short phrases based on memorized material. Slightly longer phrases must be repeated and include frequent pauses to be understood.
1	Minimal Functional Proficiency
	Able to understand very simple statements, questions, and face-to-face conversations concerning some familiar situations and many basic needs. Repetition and slower speech are necessary for understanding.
2	Limited Functional Proficiency
	Able to understand most routine conversations spoken at a normal pace relating to social and occupational situations. Some difficulty understanding common structures and vocabulary remains; occasional repetition is still needed.
3	General Functional Proficiency
	Able to understand almost all conversations spoken at a normal pace without repetitions, including discussions within the individual's occupation; readily understands phone conversations and broadcasts, but still experiences some difficulty with very fast speech, slang, and cultural references.
4	Full Functional Proficiency
	Able to understand all discussions, no matter how complex, within the listener's experience; able to understand most cultural references as well as manipulations of the language including persuasion, negotiation, conjecture, and humor.
5	Educated Native Proficiency

[A] A plus sign after Levels 1 through 4 (that is, 1+, 2+, 3+, and 4+) indicates the ability to handle successfully all of the functions of that level and, inconsistently, some of those of the next.

7.1.3.1 Audio and video ~~capabilities,~~recordings of examples of language use,

7.1.3.2 Basic reference materials, such as ~~dictionaries,~~bilingual and monolingual dictionaries,

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

TABLE 2 Levels of Speaking Proficiency[A]

Level	Description
0	No Proficiency
0+	Survival Proficiency
	Able to satisfy immediate needs such as for lodging, meals, and transportation, using memorized or rehearsed speech only. No fluency.
1	Minimal Functional Proficiency
	Able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple conversations on familiar or rehearsed topics. Experiences frequent misunderstandings. *Examples*—Can exchange greetings, elicit predictable information, and explain routine procedures in a restricted way.
2	Limited Functional Proficiency
	Able to handle routine daily interactions that are limited in scope. Able to handle confidently, but not fluently, most social conversations on such topics as current events, work, family, etc. *Examples*—Can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and receive and provide straightforward direction.
3	General Functional Proficiency
	Able to speak the language with sufficient fluency and accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. However, there are noticeable linguistic and cultural imperfections that limit the individual's ability to participate in more sophisticated interactions such as high-level negotiation. Can typically discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with ease. *Examples*—Can use the language as part of normal professional duties such as answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, understanding the essence of challenges, stating and defending policy, conducting meetings, delivering briefings, etc. Can reliably elicit information and informed opinion from native speakers.
4	Full Functional Proficiency
	Able to use language fluently and accurately on all levels pertinent to professional needs. *Examples*—Understands the details and ramifications of concepts that are culturally or conceptually different from one's own. Can set the tone of interpersonal, official, semi-official, professional, and nonprofessional verbal exchanges with a representative range of native speakers (for all audiences, purposes, tasks, and settings). Can play an effective role among native speakers in such contexts as negotiations, conferences, lectures, and debates on matters of disagreement. Can advocate a position at length, both formally and in chance encounters, using sophisticated verbal strategies.
5	Educated Native Proficiency

TABLE 2 Levels of Speaking Proficiency[A]

Level	Description
0	No Proficiency
0+	Survival Proficiency
	Able to satisfy immediate needs such as for lodging, meals, and transportation, using memorized or rehearsed speech only. No fluency.
1	Minimal Functional Proficiency
	Able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple conversations on familiar or rehearsed topics. Experiences frequent misunderstandings. *Examples*—Can exchange greetings, elicit predictable information, and explain routine procedures in a restricted way.
2	Limited Functional Proficiency
	Able to handle routine daily interactions that are limited in scope. Able to handle confidently, but not fluently, most social conversations on such topics as current events, work, family, etc. *Examples* —Can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and receive and provide straightforward direction.

7.1.3.4 ~~Authentic materials, including current and relevant periodicals.~~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).[5]

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[5] The examples included in this guide are not exhaustive and do not reflect any endorsement.

Level	Description
3	General Functional Proficiency Able to speak the language with sufficient fluency and accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. However, there are noticeable linguistic and cultural imperfections that limit the individual's ability to participate in more sophisticated interactions such as high-level negotiation. Can typically discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with ease. *Examples*—Can use the language as part of normal professional duties such as answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, understanding the essence of challenges, stating and defending policy, conducting meetings, delivering briefings, etc. Can reliably elicit information and informed opinion from native speakers.
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5	Educated Native Proficiency

A A plus sign after Levels 1 through 4 (that is, 1+, 2+, 3+, and 4+) indicates the ability to handle successfully all of the functions of that level and, inconsistently, some of those of the next.

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

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

7.1.4.2 Is appropriate to individual student needs as determined by the ~~needs analysis~~Needs Analysis and ongoing ~~evaluation,~~assessment, and

7.1.4.3 Can be ~~articulated~~ explained as necessary to the ~~client or student, or both.~~learner and client organization.

7.1.5 Procedures for ~~program~~ evaluation of learning during the training program and at the conclusion of the training program.

7.2 *Blended Learning Optimization*—Blended learning is an instructional approach designed to optimize student learning outcomes. It is an integrated approach that combines to varying degrees interactive synchronous 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. Blended Learning is thus a continuum where the proportion of instructor-facilitated learning and e-learning may vary depending on established individual learning outcomes, syllabus, course design, and access to live instructors and e-learning resources.

7.2.1 *Best Practices in Blended Learning*—Research has shown that blended learning that combines both face-to-face and e-learning achieves better and faster results than either method alone. Blended learning courses are designed holistically with technology and face-to-face learning combined. Learners can acquire certain types of language knowledge and skills more effectively and efficiently using e-learning activities; other language skills are best learned when activities and tasks are facilitated by an instructor in real time.

7.2.2 Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory and practice has informed us about necessary (or very desirable) conditions for successful language learning. Several of the following computer-mediated learning experiences should be included:

7.2.2.1 Working with samples of authentic language use in the cultural context, which can be accessed, for example, through the internet,

7.2.2.2 Having meaningful interactions with peers and other speakers of the language outside of the classroom using asynchronous communication tools, such as written or spoken chats, Wikis, Blogs, Forums or Bulletin Boards,

7.2.2.3 Participating in collaborative projects and tasks with clearly defined goals that require real-time (synchronous) negotiation of meaning with speakers of the language, using for example Skype or Face Time,[6]

7.2.2.4 Practicing pronunciation outside of the classroom using computer-based pronunciation activities with feedback,

7.2.2.5 Practicing various features of language, such as vocabulary and grammar outside of the classroom using computer-based activities and drills,

7.2.2.6 Expanding vocabulary breadth and depth using online corpora, concordances, frequency lists and dictionaries.

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[6] The examples included in this guide are not exhaustive and do not reflect any endorsement.