



ISO TC 232: Language Training

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Overview

- What is ISO and why should we care?
- International industrial standard for language training



What is ISO?

- The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies from more than 145 countries, one from each country.
- ISO is a non-governmental organization established in 1947 and based in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Its mission is to promote the development of standardization and related activities in the world with a view to facilitating the international exchange of goods and services, and to developing cooperation in the spheres of intellectual, scientific, technological and economic activity. ISO's work results in international agreements which are published as International Standards and other types of ISO documents



Examples of ISO Standards

- ISO 9000 Series: Management Quality
- ISO 14000 Series: Environmental Quality
- ISO 29000 Series: Training
- ISO 639: Language Codes



How ISO Standards are Implemented

- Through law/regulation
- Through independent certification
 - Certifying organizations may be accredited internationally
 - Certifying organizations can be field-independent



How is the US Represented in ISO?

- Each member nation designates one entity as the official member and representative
 - May be governmental (e.g., Russia, China)
 - May be NGO/Consensus standards organization (e.g., US, UK, Germany)
- For the US, this is the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)
- ANSI coordinates all US representation at ISO through:
 - ANSI-sponsored Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs)
 - TAGs sponsored by other ANSI-accredited Standards Development Organizations, such as ASTM, American Concrete Institute, American Petroleum Institute
- TAGs operate as ASTM-type subcommittees
- F43.95: US TAG to ISO TC232, open to all interested parties



ISO TC 232 Activity: Language Training

- 2008-2011: Developed ISO 29990, “Training in the Informal Sector”
- January 2010: Chinese Delegation proposes development of language training standard (ISO 29991)
 - Large market
 - Little regulation/quality assurance
- Standard in draft form – July 2011
- Mirrors F1562



ISO 29991: Challenges

- Outcomes assessment: which scale?
 - CEFR
 - ILR/STANAG
 - ACTFL
 - CB
 - Others?
- Concurrent/Consecutive Certification with generic training standard (ISO 29990)



US Positions

- Outcomes assessment:
 - any nationally/internationally recognized proficiency scale
- Generic vs language training certification
 - Language training certification!



Path Forward

- Continue to press for certification specifically in language training
- Continue active participation: We represent the language training enterprise in the US
 - Next US TAG meeting: 16 NOV 2011, Denver, CO (prior to ACTFL)
 - Next ISO TC 232 Meeting: 6-7 DEC 2011, Berlin



Contact

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