sine qua non:
Language Standards in Interpreting Education

Rico Peterson
NCIEC
10/21/06
sine qua non...

ASL I = 40-60 hrs. of classroom study
ASL I-III = 120-180 hrs. of classroom study

What can we reasonably expect to accomplish in 180 hours of instruction?
What the experts say about time to fluency...

Defense Language Institute:
ILR Proficiency Level 2 = 176 hrs
ILR Proficiency Level 2+ = 352 hrs
sine qua non...

ILR Proficiency Level 2*
(176 hrs of instruction)

✓ Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements
✓ Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope
✓ The individual’s utterances are minimally cohesive
✓ Language usage generally disturbs the native speaker

*www.dliflc.edu
ILR Proficiency Level 2+*

(352 hrs of instruction)

- Limited work proficiency
- Language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective.
- When under tension or pressure, the ability to use the language effectively may deteriorate
- May require a native speaker to adjust to (interpreter) limitations in some ways

*sine qua non...

*www.dliflc.edu
What the experts say about time to fluency...

Omaggio -- 720 hours of instruction under ideal circumstances for intermediate rating
sine qua non...

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)

Standards for Foreign Language Learning
ACTFL’s Definition of Intermediate Skill:

...able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations...

...conversation limited to predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival...
sine qua non...

**ASL I = 60 hours of classroom study**

**ASL I-III = 180 hours of classroom study**

What can we reasonably expect to accomplish in 180 hours of instruction?
Given a “typical” entry-level job or assignment, does this describe classroom activities?

What about...

- ✔ Reading aloud
- ✔ Group discussions
- ✔ Lectures/Presentations
What about...

✓ Homeroom...
✓ Assemblies...
✓ Gym class...
✓ Lunch...
Is this---

...able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations...

...conversation limited to predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival...

good enough?
sine qua non...

What the experts say about proficiency in the workplace...
## Proficiency Levels Needed in the Work World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Corresponding jobs/professions who</th>
<th>Who has this level of proficiency?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Discuss topics extensively, support opinions and hypothesize. Deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation.</td>
<td><strong>Interpreter</strong>, Accountant, Executive, Lawyer, Judge, Financial Advisor</td>
<td>Educated native speakers; students from abroad after a number of years working in a professional environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the paper *La Enseñanza de Español y Otras Lenguas Extranjeras en los Estados Unidos: Cantidad y Calidad (The Teaching of Spanish and Other Foreign Languages in the United States: Quantity and Quality)* presented at the II Congreso de la Lengua Española in Valladolid, Spain, October 18, 2001 by Dr. Elvira Swender of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Narrate and describe in past, present and future and deal effectively with unanticipated complication</td>
<td>University professor of foreign languages, Doctor, Social Worker, Police, schoolteachers, salespeople</td>
<td>Students with M.A.s or Ph.D.s, Native speakers who learned in the home environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>Who has this level of proficiency?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Create with language; initiate, maintain, and close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions</td>
<td>Aviation personnel, telephone operator, receptionist, Tour guide, cashier</td>
<td>Graduates who have not lived in native environment After 6 years of academic instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Who has this level of proficiency?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>After 2 years of academic (generally high school) instruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the paper La Enseñanza de Español y Otras Lenguas Extranjeras en los Estados Unidos: Cantidad y Calidad (The Teaching of Spanish and Other Foreign Languages in the United States: Quantity and Quality) presented at the II Congreso de la Lengua Española in Valladolid, Spain, October 18, 2001 by Dr. Elvira Swender of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)
Why do people study ASL?

- **Academic reasons** --
  - humanities requirement
  - prerequisite for applied study
  - curiosity

- **Personal reasons** --
  - friend or family member is deaf
  - curiosity
What do students expect?

- American Sign Language = English.
- Therefore, learning ASL is easy.
- Therefore, it will not take long.
Characteristics of ASL Learners

- Study conducted in 1999
  - 12 colleges/universities represented
  - 1,040 responses
  - ASL 1 students
  - Measured “ naïve” perceptions
**Characteristics of ASL Learners**

**American people are good at learning languages.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASL is a language anyone can learn.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of ASL Learners

ASL is very different from English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASL is a form of English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of ASL Learners

I believe I will learn to sign as well or better than I speak.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What do students expect?

- American Sign Language = English.
  - A language anyone can learn
  - My sign skills will exceed my English abilities
  - I will be fluent in 1-2 years
- Are these expectations reasonable?
- Do these misapprehensions confound learning?
Characteristics of ASL Learners

I do not consider deaf people to be disabled.

Agree 55.8%  Disagree 21.8%
Characteristics of ASL Learners

I can make a contribution to the lives of deaf people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part of my reason for taking this class is to help deaf people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf people are not disabled.</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can contribute to the lives of Deaf people</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am taking this class to help Deaf people</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of ASL Learners

Are you in regular contact with Deaf people?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, every day</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, at least weekly</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only rarely</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, never</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Peterson, 1999)
### Characteristics of ASL Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Contact with Deaf people (in 1975)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Miller, 1975)
## Characteristics of ASL Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Contact with Deaf people</th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly/ Occasionally</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expectations and Ambiguity

ASL = English

Curriculum = Culture

Classroom = Community

- Are these expectations reasonable?
- Do these misapprehensions confound learning?
Characteristics of ASL Learners

ASL Students come to their study with remarkably different understandings about the target language, culture, and about themselves as language learners than do most other students of world languages.
Characteristics of ASL Learners

The Unlearning Curve - Students have to unlearn much of what they think they know about:

- ASL
- Deaf People
- Language Learning
- Interpreting
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

- Communication
- Cultures
- Connections
- Comparisons
- Communities
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✓ Communication

✓ **Standard 1.1**: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions

✓ **Standard 1.2**: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✓ Communication

✓ **Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners on a variety of topics
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✓ Cultures

✓ Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied

✓ Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✓ Connections

✓ **Standard 3.1**: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the language

✓ **Standard 3.2**: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the language and its cultures
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✅ Comparisons

✅ **Standard 4.1**: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own

✅ **Standard 4.2**: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the culture studied and their own
ACTFL’s Standards for Language Learning

✓ Communities

✓ Standard 5.1: Students use the language within and beyond the school setting

✓ Standard 5.2: Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment
Language Standards

Our dilemma -

How to give students enough time to learn the language before moving them through a curriculum that requires competence in that language
Language Standards

Possible Solutions -

✓ Standardized outcomes, not standardized curriculums
✓ Realistic Expectations: Novice-High / Intermediate Low after 4 semesters/6 quarters
Language Standards

Possible Solutions -

✓ Tracking students:
  After ASL 1 or 2, grouping students into smaller sections for pre-interpreting study
  (sections of 10-12 are considered ideal)
Language Standards

Possible Solutions -

✓ Portfolio Assessment: Putting students in charge of their learning

✓ Common standards facilitate transfer between schools
Language Standards

Language Screening--

www.bbc.co.uk/languages/
Languages

A bit at a time, in your own time...

French
Gauge your level, French Steps, Ma France and more...

Spanish
Gauge your level, Spanish Steps, Talk Spanish and more...

German
Gauge your level, German Steps, Talk German and more...

Italian
Gauge your level, Italian Steps, Talk Italian and more...

Mandarin Chinese
Real Chinese and more...

Portuguese
Talk Portuguese, Brazil Inside Out and more...

Greek
Talk Greek, The Olympic Game and more...
French

Starting up

French Steps
A self-contained beginners online course
- Topics
- Grammar
- Fast track
- Pronunciation
- Vocabulary
- User guide

Quick Fix
Printable holiday phrases with audio and mp3 download.

Talk French
A video-based online resource with activities plus TV series and book

The French Experience
A longer course with TV series, book and website

Brushing up

Ma France
Improve your basic French in 24 interactive video units
- Broadband version
- Narrowband version
- Grammar
- Vocabulary

More advanced

Cool French
Mp3 audio guide to slang

Accents d'Europe
Audio reports with transcripts by topic or language focus

Musique et Paroles
Clips of songs to practise with

The French Experience 2
A TV course with book and website

Gauge your level

Test your French

How to improve

Better at languages
Better at listening

Find a class

UK course listings

For tutors

Internet in the classroom
Get the best out of video
Guide to BBC resources

Your say

Blunders, tips and more from you

Games and quizzes
Test Your French

find what suits you best

Are you a complete beginner, quite fluent or somewhere in between?

Answer one question at a time.

Choose the correct answer and you'll get a more challenging question.

Choose a wrong one and you'll get your final score plus a guide to those parts of our site that will be most useful for you.

Start

This quiz gives you an approximate indication of your knowledge. It is not an exact assessment tool and does not correspond to any national levels.
1. You are in a Parisian café and would like to order a coffee. What would you say?

   Un café, _________________

   - s'il vous plaît.
   - salut.
   - je vous en prie.
   - enchanté.
Test Your French

find what suits you best

Your score so far

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Correct.
s'il vous plaît is the right answer.

2. Which one of the following words completes the phrase 'Salle de _______'?
   - lits
   - chambre
   - bains
   - déjeuner
Correct.

de bains is the correct answer.

**3. A passer-by asks you a question. Click on the speaker to hear it and choose the most likely answer.**

If you have technical problems getting the audio, read the transcript.

- La première à droite, et tout droit.
- C'est ouvert de 9H00 à 17H00.
- Le ticket coûte 5 euros.
- C'est très intéressant.
Test Your French

find what suits you best

Your score so far

Correct.
La première à droite, et tout droit. is the right answer.

4. Odd one out. One of the following is not suitable for vegetarians:

- Légumes
- Champignon
- Agneau
- Beurre
Test Your French
find what suits you best

Your score so far

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12

Correct.

Agneau is the correct answer.

5. You've just met someone and you want to ask him where he is from. You're still being formal at this stage.

- D'où viens-tu ?
- Où allez-vous ?
- D'où venez-vous ?
- Tu veux venir ?
Correct.

**D'où venez-vous ?** is the right answer.

6. You want to take a French friend out for dinner. Which sequence of words is in the right order?

- Au restaurant / ce soir / tu veux / aller ?
- Aller / ce soir / tu veux / au restaurant ?
- Ce soir / aller / au restaurant / tu veux ?
- Tu veux / aller / au restaurant / ce soir ?
Correct.

**Tu veux aller au restaurant ce soir ?** is the correct choice.

7. Click on the speaker to hear a conversation at a museum information desk and then select the correct morning opening hours.

- De 09H00 à 12H30
- De 09H30 à 12H00
- De 09H30 à 12H30
- De 09H00 à 11H30

If you have technical problems getting the audio, read the [transcript](#).
Sorry, wrong. The correct answer was \textbf{De 09H30 à 12H30}, from 9.30 am to 12.30 am.

You scored 6, so you might like to try these:

- Get some more practice listening to details with \textbf{French Steps}. You may like to try the whole course, which is entirely online.

- \textbf{Talk French} is a quick way to brush up your knowledge. There are online activities, a TV series on the \textbf{BBC Learning Zone} and a handy \textbf{book} with audio cassettes or a CD pack.

- \textbf{Make French your Business} and follow this short course with basic work and travel situations.

Add this page to your favourites.
Where do we go from here?