The ILR 2012-2022

Thinking of the Road Ahead

Personal Thoughts

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ILR 1955-2011
Voluntary Pioneering

• Accomplishments
  – Development of commonly understood skill level descriptors – publication of ILR SLDs by GPO (OPM) 8
  – Development of OPIs
  – Translation, Interpretation SLDs
  – Lingua-cultural competence SLD
  – Audio translation SLD

• Volunteers without organization charter with primary facility sponsor from State/FSI/SLS
1990-2011
Growth of Standards

• ASTM Standards
  - Instruction
  - Interpreting
  - Translation
  - Testing

• ASTM Technical Committee F43
  - Subcommittees
  - Technical Advisory Groups

• These standards are directed at the relationship between provider of service and the consumer of that service.

• IMHO They do not address the linguistic performance of the translator, interpreter, instructor, or test except by reference to ILR skill level descriptors.
Why Standards

• Our market economy and much of our federal government activity are successful only when there is a mutual trust between the providers and the consumers of commodities and services

• Standards provide the guidelines for building and maintaining that mutual trust

• Standards are enforceable but only by the parties that agree to the application of the standard in a contractual relationship
Standards

• Ensure performance within provider – consumer relationships but only when both parties understand and accept the standards
• Standards for performance of hardware/software exist in firm articulation of what the hardware/software is expected to do in terms of performance
• Can similar standards be written for translation, interpretation, or language analysis performance?
Performer Certification

• IMO the nation needs a national system for certification of language workers
• Achieving national certification will require public and private funds applied to development of the methodology, the tests, establishment of test centers and an administrative body.
• Political and economic pressure must be generated through local, state, and federal government organizations with support from non-government sector, academe’ and industry
Some Candidate Domains

– Community Social Services
– Health and medical services
– Legal and contractual services
– Diplomatic and International Relations
– General information and intelligence operations
– Public works and utilities
– Science and engineering
– Export globalization/localization
Certification Tiers Within Domains

• **TIERS**
  – Novice
  – Apprentice
  – Journeyman
  – Professional
  – Expert

• **Types of performance within tiers**
  – For example “journeyman” escort, simultaneous, or consecutive interpreter
Performer Certification Questions

• Is certification of the performer the key to meeting specifications and standards?

• Do the FBI and State Department programs offer models for building a national certification program?

• Will the ATA self assessment and plans for modernizing translator certification succeed?
  – Self assessment of current methodology
  – Plans to improve and facilitate process
A Federal Civilian Language Corps

- Modeled on the enlisted military language workforce drawing on graduates of secondary school system
- Recruit best and brightest with high language aptitude and language education or heritage speakers for six year commitment
- Provide basic language enhancement and training in translation and interpretation arts
- Work in pool for temporary assignments where needed or permanent assignment with an agency.
- Tuition assistance for college studies on own time
- Establish career opportunities for continuation of government service.
The ILR Role

• Should the ILR in its current form take a role in standardization and certification?
• How could the ILR support a national program of standards and certification of language workers?
• Can the ILR help build the Federal Civilian Language Corps?
• IMO The ILR working together with the ATA, NAJIT, ACTFL, MLA, AAAL and other entities with language equities can provide the opening forum.