



***Standards for  
Teachers of English  
at Pre-Service***

**The STEPS Standards  
Development Project  
Process Documentation  
April 1999 - January 2003**

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*by*

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# **The STEPS Standards Development Project Process Documentation**

**April 1999 - March 2003**

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## **Introduction**

The Center for the Development of English Language Teaching (CDELТ) is a national center, housed at Ain Shams University in Cairo, whose mission, as outlined in a strategic planning session in February 2001, includes a focus on standards development:

*Center programs include serving as a clearinghouse for standards development, testing and evaluation tools, language teaching and teacher education tools, and materials and technology for English language learning and English teacher preparation....(CDELТ Mission Statement, 1999)*

CDELТ's Standards for Teachers of English at Pre-Service (STEPS) Project, supported by IELP-II, has as its aim working with a national group of Egyptian educators to develop Egyptian standards (descriptions of what teachers should know and be able to do) for teachers graduating from pre-service English teacher education programs. (Pre-service teacher education, for the purposes of this project, was defined as teacher education in the university through the first three years of teaching.) The standards development phase of the STEPs has been completed. Standards developed by the STEPs Task Force have undergone field review and the indicators that further describe the standards have been drafted. In fact, the STEPs standards are already being put to use in Egypt, serving as a framework for the Egyptian National Standards Committee for developing teacher standards in content areas of English, Arabic, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

The process used for the CDELТ standards development project is notable for the care taken to assure Egyptian ownership of both process and product, leading to both sustainability and maintainability of the standards developed. The purpose of this report is to document processes used in the STEPS project from project conceptualization through project implementation and to outline short-term plans and long-term possible future directions for the project and the standards developed through the project. The report examines the way the work was implemented and the steps taken to reach project objectives. Though the goals of this project were specific to English language education, the lessons learned and recommendations are relevant to the process of standards development in Egypt for future USAID projects as well as for IELP-II partners in implementing change.

The report is organized into four parts: Part I is a discussion of the rationale for the project and background on the approach taken in the project; Part II includes the description of the philosophy and approach taken to standards development in the STEPS Project; Part III addresses experiences and issues in the implementation phase of the project; and Part IV highlights the major achievements and outcomes of the project.

## **I. Origins and Objectives of the Project**

There is a general complaint about and dissatisfaction with low proficiency level of Faculty of Education graduates both in linguistic and pedagogic competences as reflected by many of the Ministry of Education (MoE) supervision reports, research and studies conducted by staff of the Faculties of Education and through interviews with students” (El Naggar, 2001).

Educators in Egypt have long been concerned with providing graduate teachers of English from Faculties of Education with adequate social, linguistic, and pedagogic competences to teach effectively in primary, preparatory and secondary schools. Setting standards was seen as a prerequisite to achieving this goal. Between 1999 and 2001, a number of awareness-raising presentations on standards were given at conferences and several meetings were held. At one of these events, a national meeting of key stakeholders from Faculties of Education (FOEs), the Ministry of Education (MOE), aid agencies, and private language programs held at IELP II in April 2000, a series of recommendations were made regarding directions to take in the standards setting process. One key recommendation was that any standards initiative should be Egyptian-owned.

IELP II has been consistently concerned with sustainability and maintainability throughout the history of the project. As part of this concern, the project has offered funding to local Egyptian institutions of higher education who wished to embark on projects to improve teaching and learning in Egypt. In April 2001, Dr. Zeinab el Naggar, Director of CDELT, submitted a proposal to IELP II for funding to set standards for pre-service teachers of English. The goals of the original project were to:

- To establish an organizational framework for setting standards.
- To begin training a cadre of specialists from FoE and MoE capable of and willing to set performance standards
- To set performance standards for English language education majors

The standards were developed by a Task Force made up of representatives of Faculties of Education in Egypt. Members came from at least 12 Faculties of 10 Universities. A series of focus groups led to three workshops during which domains (broad areas for standards development) were decided on, standards were drafted and refined and performance indicators developed. Three short follow-on workshops were also held between the workshops and all task force members also worked inbetween workshops to develop standards and raise awareness among their administrators, colleagues, and students.

Because participants were not paid for their standards-development work, the process thus represented a very cost-effective way of developing standards. However, it relied on considerable commitment on the part of Task Force members to engage in voluntary work of a challenging and time-consuming nature.

## **II. Description of the Philosophy and Approach Taken to Standards Development in the STEPS Project**

The STEPS project was based on a carefully thought out and well principled approach to standard setting which built on successes and challenges from projects working toward change in other contexts. A first stage was to look at previous standards projects and learn from their successes and failure.

We interviewed those involved in directing previous standards projects seeking to find out why previous standards projects had failed to be implemented and used in Egypt. Reasons given were:

1. Expatriates led the project. Egyptians were not involved in writing the standards and were only peripherally involved in reviewing them.
2. Plans were not made for dissemination and use of the standards.
3. Many of the Egyptian individuals involved were quite senior and retired shortly after the conclusion of the project, so that no one who knew about the standards was left to pass them along.

We took the above reasons into account in the design of the project in the following ways.

### **Egyptian Ownership**

In order for the STEPS project to succeed, its work needed to be widely owned by its Egyptian stakeholders rather than being led by expatriates. Therefore, stakeholders were involved at every stage of the process from conception of the need for standards, through outlining and writing standards, to final publication, dissemination, and application.

The STEPS project placed emphasis on Egyptian ownership of standards at a national level using the following means:

- **Wide representation.** Representatives from 12 Faculties of Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Program Planning and Monitoring Unit were involved in standards development as members of the STEPS Task Force.
- **Process to promote consensus.** Achieving consensus in a large group was a challenging task. Activities to learn and practice consensus-building and decision-making were a key feature of task force meetings. This will be discussed in greater detail below.
- **Volunteer participants.** STEPS Task Force members were only reimbursed for the expenses they incurred in attending the workshops; they volunteered their time at workshops and for all their work between workshops. The voluntary nature of this work ensured genuine commitment on the part of the STEPS Task Force and makes possible the continuance of the work after IELP-II concludes. The voluntary nature of the work did, however, mean that there was some attrition after the first workshop when a few individuals determined they were unable to commit their unpaid time to the project.

- **Work done by participants.** External consultants served as informants, facilitators, providers of access to resources, and editors. They did not actually write the standards, which was the responsibility of Task Force members. This ensured that the standards genuinely would be the product of Egyptian expertise.

## **Dissemination and Use of Standards**

We were concerned from the outset of the project that the standards developed by the CDELT Task Force would go beyond being just a document on paper, but would actually be put into use. IELP has been consistently concerned with sustainability in that standards produced should actually be used. We also focused on maintainability – that standards would continue to be reviewed, expanded and upgraded and supporting materials developed and revised. The aim was that CDELT would be the national center to take on responsibilities for providing leadership in disseminating and periodically reviewing standards and that the Task Force would be prepared to put the standards to use in their own educational roles, to teach others about the standards, and to plan a schedule for periodic renewal at the conclusion of the project. Activities working toward sustainability included:

- Focusing on uses of standards right from the outset. We discussed how the standards we were producing might be used as well as obstacles to their use. We kept a constant eye on the end use of standards so that what was being produced would actually be needed and wanted by those in the field.
- Thorough testing for validity of the standards was a key of the process (see below)
- Ensuring that the STEPS Task Force included not only senior faculty members who might be close to retirement but also those in mid-career and junior positions. Since the retirement age for faculty is 60, many of the experienced leaders are close to that milestone. So we also made sure that the Task Force included both senior staff to provide leadership and status to the product, and also junior faculty to provide energy and continuity.

## ***Challenges and Ways in Which They were Overcome***

**Language.** One of the challenges to the project was the level of written English required for developing standards. We addressed this through teaching about academic writing, providing models, and giving clear and specific feedback. We also edited the standards for consistency and accuracy, subject to the approval of the Task Force.

**Developing Shared Ownership.** A second challenge was developing a group with the ability to develop and write standards as a team. Task Force members had wide differences in writing expertise, and moreover were used to, and concerned with, taking individual credit for their work. We worked to teach the group members to give and receive constructive criticism and to share ownership of the final product.

**Working without remuneration.** Most of the participants expected to be paid to work on an AID project such as this one. The project felt that Egyptians would be

more likely to own this work if they chose to do it for professional reasons. So, a third challenge was bringing out the motivation in participants to do this work – which involved significant effort in writing and meetings between the workshops – for the good of education in Egypt. A few participants felt that they could not commit their own time to the project and had to drop out. Those who stayed with the Task Force communicated to us that their work was valuable and justified. We have had conversations with those who dropped out that implied that they regretted the decision in the end.

In order to build a Task Force willing and able to work together to achieve tangible outcomes, we designed activities which would develop a cohesive task force with good skills for working in groups.

### **Techniques used to build community**

In order to shape the Task Force into a group capable of working cooperatively together, community-building techniques were essential throughout the standard setting process, but particularly at its onset. Techniques included:

- **Establishing mutually determined “Rules.”** During the first workshop, we worked with the group to establish its “Rules” of operation that would assure full and relatively even participation in discussion as well as effective group decision-making processes. This helped to ensure that the group worked efficiently while ensuring that the environment in which such work took place was not imposed.
- **Modeling active listening and shared decision-making.** Consultants worked to model before the group the types of exchanges they encouraged from Task Force Members. These types of exchanges were important in ensuring that the voices of all those were heard, particularly in view of the mixed nature of the Task Force group which involved junior faculty as well as senior professors.
- **Exchange of teaching and teacher-training activities.** Each day had a “theme” that modeled and encouraged using effective teaching activities in the workshop, so that participants would have classroom applications for techniques used in the workshop. However, an important underlying reason for these activities was to allow participants to get to know one another both personally and professionally. Research on group cohesiveness shows that such activities help to facilitate group formation and efficient group working.
- **Providing Shared leadership.** As a consulting team, we worked to model how shared leadership could work, and offered and accepted suggestions and improvements in front of the group. We counted heavily on the leadership of Zeinab El Naggar, director of CDELT, and worked very closely with her every step of the way. Whenever possible, we gave participants leadership opportunities to help them feel and take responsibility for the group.

## Techniques used to facilitate participant output.

A number of techniques were used to elicit frequent output from participants. These included:

- **Group tasks.** Tasks were provided in which all group members had different roles yet shared responsibility for the outcome. Some of these included:
  - **Round Robin writing.** Groups work on a text for a set period of time, then rotate the text to the next group and work on a new one until all groups have reviewed/expanded all texts.
  - **Pair-Share.** Pairs respond to a question or instruction. Then they join a second pair and each person shares what his/her partner said.
  - **Numbered Heads Together.** Groups number from 1-4. The facilitator reads a question and groups “put their heads together” to answer it. Then the facilitator pulls a number out of a hat and the group members with that number share their group’s answer.
  - **Jigsaw.** One member of each group does part of a task independently, then the group meets and members each share their part of the information with the group.
- **Consensus-building activities.** Various voting and decision-making techniques were used to build consensus decisions.
  - **Pyramid Decision-Making.** Participants come to consensus on a decision in twos, then fours, then eights, and finally in the full group.
  - **Dot voting.** Participants are given certain options on the flipchart. Each participant is given a sticky dot to place by their preferred choice.
  - **Graffiti.** Participants respond in writing to certain drafts and/or options which have been placed on the walls around the room.
  - **EQS (Encourage, Question, Suggest)** (McCloskey, 1999). Participants give structured, constructive feedback to one another on drafts.
  - **Four Corners.** Choices (of topics, etc) are posted in the four corners of the room. Participants choose a corner, then carry out an activity with the others who have made the same choice.
- **Time Limits.** Limited time periods are provided for tasks and decisions to help participants work efficiently.
- **Brainstorming tasks.** These tasks build on the wide previous experience and knowledge of our team. We used such techniques as
  - **Cognitive Mapping.** Participants brainstorm ideas on a topic as presenter records them in a cognitive map, helping them to develop categories and subcategories, and to outline relationships among terms and topics.
  - **Carousel Brainstorming.** Input is elicited through questions/ideas written at the top of charts arranged around the room. Groups of participants rotate from one chart to the next, responding to others’ comments and adding their own.
  - **Shared Writing.** Presenters elicit ideas from participants and develop a manuscript together. (We used the data show to help participants see their manuscript develop.)

### **III. Implementation**

#### **Revising and Rewriting Process**

We used these consensus-building techniques to help the Task Force decide on five key domains under which standards would be organized. Then the Task Force was split into five groups to work on standards in these areas. We based group assignment on individuals' preferences as well as balancing experience and language skills.

Between the first and second workshops, the domain groups produced a first draft of their standards which were further refined during the second workshop.

During the second workshop, as domain groups worked on the standards, we felt that some groups felt they "owned" the standards in their domain rather than owning the standards overall. This, coupled with the fact that some individuals were too easily satisfied with early drafts, led us to turn to activities which promoted greater involvement of the whole group in writing standards under all domains. Once the Task Force was ready to embark on the process of writing indicators, groups were reformed to include one member from each domain group and then tasks were circulated to assure that everyone would feel ownership of all the standards. We also formed an e-group for Task Force members and this was extremely helpful in enabling Task Force members to seek and offer feedback on draft standards.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities of Standards Developers**

During the early stages, consultants acted as facilitators. In the later stages of the standards development process, consultants would raise queries and offer suggestions as to wording. A key to the smooth progression of the writing was the preliminary groundwork which had been done to promote shared ownership and the giving and receiving of constructive feedback. It is easy to dismiss such groundwork as trivial and game-like. However, it was essential to build a task force willing and able to write standards to a high level.

#### **Checking the Validity of Standards**

As standards are increasingly being used in planning and implementing instruction, research is beginning to appear on ways in which reliability can be tested. Nevertheless, a review of the literature revealed little in the way of a methodology for standards validation. The standards approach was to circulate standards and invite comments in the form of responses to questionnaire surveys. We felt that this approach to standard setting was lacking in both depth and breadth of analysis. We also noted that many drawbacks of research by survey alone that have been identified by researchers (e.g., Oppenheim, 1992; Cohen & Manion, 1994) were

particularly relevant to the current situation. We therefore felt it was important to go beyond these methods in the process of setting our own standards.

Furthermore, our experience from other contexts where standards are already in use has made us very aware of the importance of having standards which are reliable, appropriate and relevant.

As a first step in ensuring this was the case, we had already set out the criteria against which our own standards should be evaluated – our “Standards for Standards” developed during the STEPS Task Force Workshop II. (See Appendix 2 of this report.) Participants evaluated the STEPS Draft Standards against these criteria and made recommendations for revisions. We then proceeded to carry out an internal validity check before embarking on the field review process.

### **Internal Validity Checks**

1. **Domain Check.** Did each standard fit clearly within the domain in which it was placed?

We checked this by cutting up the standards and getting our 26 participants to arrange the strips according to domain. They were then asked to check against our completed standards document. The activity was carried out very early on during the first day of the workshop before participants were shown the latest draft of the standards. This was done in an effort to ensure that participants would be reading the standards carefully with a fresh eye, rather than relying on memory of where the standards fit.

In this way, we identified two instances where there was a lack of clarity. We made the decision to place one of the standards that had originally been in the Assessment Domain into the Instruction Domain. We postponed a decision on the other standard until our indicators had been drafted and the results of the field survey had come in.

2. **Checking for construct validity.** To check for construct validity, we went back to looking at what exactly it was that we were trying to measure: what a newly qualified teacher should know and be able to do. We asked participants to think of an ideal teacher and brainstorm that teacher’s qualities. We then checked these qualities against our standards.
3. **Checking for concurrent validity.** To check for concurrent validity, we asked participants to list what was currently taught in faculties of education. We then used this as a checklist to see whether everything that was taught was covered somewhere within our standards.

While this is obviously not a foolproof way of checking for concurrent validity, it gave the Task Force useful information about the relevance of the standards to what is currently taught in Faculties of Education.

4. **Clarity Check.** To check whether our standards would be clear and understandable to the pre-service teachers, faculty and supervisors who would use them, we asked participants to read the standards in pairs, with one partner reading the standards as if he/she were a student teacher. Their task was to highlight any words or terms that were unclear to them in this reading. This activity provided a great deal of useful information and it was decided that the STEPS standards should have an accompanying glossary if they are to be understood by all stakeholders. (The glossary is included in Appendix 3 of this report.)
  
5. **Checking for content and face validity.** The above activities also checked for content and face validity. Additionally, we required participants to draw a spidergram of what student teachers learn while they are engaged in teaching practice and had them compare the contents of that diagram to the contents of the standards to see if the standards were complete. .

## **External Field Review**

A field review of the draft standards was designed to:

- Collect the opinions of a full range of stakeholders regarding the following aspects of the standards:
  - clarity
  - comprehensibility
  - relevance to Egyptian context
  - coverage
  - applicability
  - usefulness
- Ensure that the data collected reflect the views of our stakeholder audience by comparing the audience of the field review with our audience of stakeholders
- Triangulate data to maximize reliability and ensure that we could be confident that any action taken was not based solely on the views of a few individuals
- Have checks in place to prevent multiple responses from a single person

The task force collected Field Review data on the standards using three instruments.

### **1. Online Survey**

This tool enabled the Task Force to gather feedback from a large number of individuals from many aspects of education in Egypt. We chose a Web resource tool called *SurveyMonkey* (See [www.SurveyMonkey.com](http://www.SurveyMonkey.com)). Once the questions to be asked in the survey were determined, this tool facilitated the construction of the survey and collected and summarized responses from anyone who took the survey on the Web. Each Task was given ten letters to use to invite individuals to participate in the online survey and to provide them with access information. Again this provided an opportunity for indirect learning, with a number of Task Force members noting that they could use SurveyMonkey to help with the collection and

analysis of data for their own research purposes. (*Copies of the instruments are included in the September, 2002 Report on the STEPS Project.*)

## **2. Paper Survey**

The Task Force also made the web survey available in paper format for stakeholders who did not have easy access to the Internet. Each Task Force member took ten copies of the paper survey to elicit responses. They distributed the survey to and collected it from individuals in identified groups that were seen as stakeholders to the STEPS Standards and who stated they were willing to complete the survey. Data from the paper surveys was entered (with a separate code) on the online survey for ease of analysis.

## **3. Interview Questionnaire**

To obtain more detailed qualitative data, Task Force members each conducted five interviews asking more in-depth questions about stakeholders' responses to the standards and possible uses they may make of the standards. In preparation for this activity, the task force watched and critiqued two interviews – one “good” one and one “bad” one, and discussed ways to conduct an interview effectively, including

- Creating a non-threatening atmosphere,
- Active listening,
- Asking probing follow-up questions, and
- Careful note taking.

## **Summary of Results of the Field Review**

The online survey was collated and analyzed using the data analysis tool within SurveyMonkey. Two hundred survey questionnaires were collated and analyzed using EXCEL. Data from 75 interviews was coded and analyzed using categories developed by a small team of Task Force members. (Complete results are included in the Field Review Report document, submitted to IELP-II in the spring of 2003.

Our 340 field reviewers showed strong support for the draft standards with 85% of the standards receiving an approval rating of 90% or over.

All standards which received comments of any type were carefully reviewed. Particular attention was paid to comments on those standards which attracted less than an 80% approval rating. Consultants discussed these standards and came up with changes which addressed the issues identified in the Field Review. These changes were then put to the Task Force for approval.

## **Awareness Raising**

Awareness-raising was essential to achieve understanding and get support for the standards. The project worked to build support for the STEPS standards throughout

Egypt simultaneously using both top-down and bottom-up approaches to awareness-raising.

- A series of meetings by senior members of the task force were held with Faculty Deans, the Ministry of Education, and the Supreme Council of the Universities to inform high-level officials of the project along the way and to gather support for the project.
- The views of key stakeholders, including the Ministry, were sought before the start of the official project
- An action plan which required Task Force members to inform others of the standards in development was undertaken by all Task Force members between the second and third Task Force members were involved in a large number of additional awareness-raising events. They reported reaching 1140 individuals between April and September of 2002.

## ***Achievements and Outcomes***

### **The STEPS Product in Action**

The STEPS Task Force produced complete standards in five domains, with indicators for each standard.

- Standards were revised based on a series of internal validity checks in September, 2002 (See report on STEPS Workshop III)
- Standards were again be redrafted to incorporate input from stakeholders as a result of field review process in the spring of 2003 (See report on STEPS Workshop IV)
- Representative indicators were written and then revised based on the Field Review (See report on STEPS Workshop IV)

**National Standards Committee.** The STEPS standards document has already been used as framework and model for the Teacher Standards of the National Standards Committee in English, Arabic, Social Studies, and Mathematics/ The STEPs domains are being used for all the content areas, with the content domain being re-designed to meet the needs of teachers in that content area. These standards have been expanded to include both preservice and in-service teachers. These documents by the national committee are still in draft form at the time of this writing, but are soon to be released.

**Accreditation Task Force.** The Minister of Education has spoken recently (September 2003) regarding interest in developing an accreditation process in Egypt, and has established a team of professionals to work on the commission which includes Dr. Nadia as vice-chair and Dr. Zeinab as a member. We expect that the National Teacher Standards, incorporating much of the work of STEPS, will use the Teacher Standards they have developed in the accreditation process.

**Faculties.** The document is also being used by individuals within Faculties of Education for assessment purposes. Other members of the Task Force are experimenting with other potential uses of standards.

**Assessment tools.** A workshop was held in August-September 2003 to develop rubrics for assessment of achievement of these and other standards and field testing of these rubrics is underway this fall.

### **Capacity Building**

A cadre of professionals with a depth and breadth of understanding of standards and the standards development process is in place. Eight members of the STEPS Task Force are serving on the National Standards Committee for English Language Curriculum. Since the total number of committee members is only 14 this is a good indication of the value placed on the STEPS team members by the Ministry of Education and shows how the resources invested in the STEPS project are bearing fruit without further outside funding.

Dr. Zeinab and Barbara Thornton, have also provided bilingual training on the process of standards development for the National Standards Committee. Interest in further training on assessment aspects of standards has also been discussed.

Several members of the STEPS Task Force worked on the team that developed the Learner Standards for English used in developing the Primary I English materials.

Dr. Zeinab was a workshop consultant in the recent Standards Development Workshop: "Rubrics and Exemplars" along with Dr. Maysoun Omar and Dr. Mary Lou McCloskey. They were ably assisted in implementing the workshop by three STEPS Task Force Members, Asmaa Mostafa, Heba Galil, and Mona Zaza. Including Egyptian leaders, now quite knowledgeable about standards and effective at giving workshops, has expanded learning possibilities through providing presentation, interpretation, and explanations in both Arabic and English.

The work of the STEPS Task Force has also received international interest. Several Task Force members along with Dr. Zeinab, Dr. McCloskey and Barbara Thornton presented at the international TESOL Convention in March, 2003. Dr. Zeinab was asked to speak on standards at an international convention in Jordan, and Dr. Zeinab and Dr. McCloskey have been invited to give addresses at TESOL Arabia in March, 2004.

### **Lessons Learned**

**Integration of STEPS Standards.** Our approach to standards, involving a wide range of stakeholders in the standards development process and promoting even wider ownership of the standards through an extensive field review, has helped to lead – more quickly than we ever expected – to the incorporation of those standards (and a number of those who created them) into the work of the National Standards Committee, and probably also into future efforts to develop certification and accreditation in Egypt. We feel that our approach was validated by this outcome.

**Terminology.** Standards development is a fairly new area, and the terminology used in this area is inconsistent. We have endeavored to use commonly understood terminology whenever we could, but when there was no agreement, we have tried to define terms clearly and use them consistently. We have felt considerable responsibility in this area because the way we use terms has tended to become the way they are used nationally. Although we don't wish to dictate terminology for the standards movement in Egypt, we do wish to support the development of consistent use of terms. We have provided a glossary of terms with this document that we hope will prove helpful.

## ***Next Steps / Recommendations***

### **Dissemination**

- Awareness-raising activities by Task Force members and leaders will be continued although such awareness raising may be broader in nature than previous activities.
- Task Force Members are continuing to present on the project at a number of international and national conferences.

### **Applications**

The value of the STEPS Standards is in how they are actually used in educational improvement in Egypt. :

- The Task Force began to explore how standards might be used in assessment during Workshop III. Further work in this area is a distinct possibility
- Standards could be also used in developing/revising course syllabi in Faculties of Education. Further training would be needed on the application of standards to curriculum design.
- Standards could be used in developing observation and assessment tools for supervisors in the Ministry of Education
- The model for standards development, and the sample standards could be used to assist standards development in other areas, for example:
  - Standards for teacher assessment
  - Standards for teacher self-assessment
  - Standards for syllabus and curriculum design
  - Standards to guide course design
- There is clear potential for the development of standards in other areas namely:
  - Program/Unit standards for Faculties of Education
  - Adult learner standards and applications
  - Standards for learners and teachers in other content areas.

## **Institutional Home**

Projects of this nature need to be housed in a central Egyptian institution. CDELT was an ideal home for the project meaning that the standards could be owned by all Egyptian Faculties of Education rather than being associated with one particular university.

## **Implementation**

It is important to keep a constant eye on how standards will be used and keep possible obstacles to the application of standards in mind. Based on performance / importance surveys from the field of management , we developed an importance / implementability survey. Our Task Force members were asked to rank possible uses of standards in terms of their importance and then rank those same uses in terms of how easy they would be to implement in the Egyptian context. Statistical procedures were used to calculate the importance / implementability gap.

However, for standards to become institutionalized is a long process. Leaders of the Task Force have the necessary expertise to collaborate in longer term planning at national level in this area.

## **Conclusion**

The STEPS project succeeded on a variety of levels. The project has produced standards for teacher education that have already found acceptance in the Egyptian educational system. Why? First, the process used to develop this project included carefully attention to developing local ownership and developing expertise in and commitment to developing and using standards. Second, the process also included care taken that the standards developed were very good ones. A set of very useful internal validity checks was developed and applied and tools for a broad field review of draft standards contributed both to a sense of ownership and to wide awareness of the standards project and standards in genera.

This model of standards development is certainly not typical -- many other projects simply collect a few experts who review and revise someone else's standards. Rather, it is unique in the area of foreign language standards development. We feel that it provides a highly useful model for others working in similar circumstances. It is cost-effective, thoroughly validated and most importantly assures national ownership.

## **Appendix 1: Timeline of STEPS Antecedents and Activities**

The following annotated timeline outlines the steps taken first to explore the interest in standards and the current level of understanding, then to work with Egyptian educators to generate ideas and propose plans for developing standards in Egypt, and finally to execute the plan by drafting standards, conducting a field review, and making revisions.

Activities 1 to 8 below describe activities which were precursors to STEPS. They show how the planning and awareness process is important before embarking on a project of this magnitude. Activity 9 represents the official start of the STEPS project. It should be noted that the activities mentioned below are not limited to the official STEPS workshops. The STEPS project was disseminated through and had an effect on a number of other activities which at first sight might appear peripheral. Likewise other IELP projects such as PHAROS had an effect on STEPS. It is this integration with other activities beyond the strict confines of the workshop series that is unique to STEPS.

### **1. 2<sup>ND</sup> Cairo Conference, April 1999**

**Event:** Barbara Thornton, Zeinab El Naggar, Reda Fadel and Sayed Ghabbour offered a plenary panel session at the Cairo Conference on the topic of “Standards for Supervisors in Egypt

**Purpose:** The objectives of the plenary session were to describe the role of standards, particularly as refers to supervisors and to share with the wider audience the dialog that has been taking place regarding the setting of standards in Egypt.

**Attended by:** 200 ministry and faculty members who participated in previous IELP-II training activities.

**Outcomes:** Considerable interest in standards was shown by the high attendance at the session, though the audience perhaps did not indicate a true grasp of concepts of or rationale for standards. A questionnaire written by Zeinab El Naggar and Barbara Thornton was given to all attendees at the plenary. Analysis of the responses revealed that there was little real understanding among participants of the purposes of standards. The fact that standards might be used for assessment purposes was seen as threatening by a number of respondents who saw this as a potential obstacle to the setting of standards. The importance of education and awareness-building about standards was made clear.

**Key supporting documentation:** *See final report Barbara Thornton’s Supervisory Skills Consultancy, April 1999. Text of the plenary is also available from Barbara Thornton.*

## **2. Pre-Service Teacher Education Improvement Project, October 18th - November 2nd 1999**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Gayle Nelson conducted focus groups with faculty at four locations (Ismailia, Cairo, Assiut, Alexandria).

**Purpose:** The major goal of this activity to introduce participants to the proposal writing process. Consultants helped participants from Faculties of Education to identify areas of focus for project proposals and gathered information to aid consultants in writing Request for Assistance document to elicit proposals for IELP-II Teacher Improvement Grants from faculty members.

**Attended by:** About 150 faculty members from Ain Shams, Alexandria, Assuit, Beni-Suef, Damanhour, Damietta, Fayoum, Kafr El Sheikh, Ismailia, Mansoura, Menouifiya, Minia, New Valley, Sohag, Tanta, and Zagazig.

**Outcomes:** Participants came up with a long list of potential proposal objectives and made recommendations for the RFA process. The first objective on the list was: "Develop standards for English teacher education and accreditation procedures for programs." Proposals were eventually written for competitive grants from IELP-II. One of the funded proposals came from CDELT and focused on developing standards for teacher education.

**Key supporting documentation:** *Final Report on Pre-service Teacher Education Improvement Project (PETEP) Focus Groups by Mary Lou McCloskey and Gayle Nelson, submitted November 11, 1999.*

## **3. Standards National Focus Group Meeting, April 2000**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton facilitated a national meeting to examine the topic of standards. The meeting was held at IELP-II and co-sponsored by IELP-II and the English Language Teaching office of the United States Department of State.

**Purpose:** Participants were to explore the current status of standards and the potential for Standards Development projects in Egypt.

**Attended by:** Nearly 30 key educational stakeholders from the Ministry of Education (MoE), Faculties of Education (FoEs), CDELT, EgypTesol, distinguished consultants, private institutions, US Department of State and IELP II.

**Outcomes:** Participants expressed an awareness of the importance of standards and a need for standards in Egypt. A wide-ranging discussion of a number of issues ensued including what needed to be done in order to set and implement standards in Egypt. Participants reflected on the various standards initiatives

that had taken place in Egypt and were briefed on current projects including the World Bank project. Reasons why standards were necessary in Egypt were explored.

*Following is a short list selected from recommendations made by the group:*

- To reach consensus, many need to be involved, including ministry, faculty, supervisors, teachers, and maybe even students
- Relevant parties concerned should be identified
- It is important that the standards are Egyptian-owned
- Group members should research standards in other parts of the world
- Measures for auditing those standards should be explored
- Ministry's involvement is essential
- It is important to begin taking first steps toward standards development
- Shared communication from the very early stages is essential
- We should learn from standards-setting processes in other contexts
- Top-down vs. bottom-up approaches work best in Egypt
- We need to know more about attitudes toward standards at the highest levels
- This process has potential for empowering educators and giving them a sense of ownership
- A mix of approaches to the setting of standards is encouraged: learning from the standards-setting process in other countries while at the same time examining the features unique to the educational system and processes in Egypt

***Key supporting documentation:*** *Notes taken at focus group meeting and distributed by IELP-II to all participants, June 2001.*

#### **4. Egyptesol Plenary, October 2000: Standards in Egypt**

**Event:** Richard Boyum, US Regional English Language Officer, chaired a plenary panel discussion on Standards in Egypt. Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton were among panelists. Other panelists included Zeinab El Naggar, Yasser Luxor from GDIST and Dr. Salah el Araby.

**Purpose:** Mary Lou McCloskey shared with the audience the work being done on standards in the US while Barbara Thornton talked about the history of standards in Egypt and presented her analysis of the data on supervisory standards collected earlier in the year. Zeinab El Naggar presented a history of Standards in Egypt.

**Attended by:** about 200 participants at Egyptesol

**Outcomes:** Awareness was raised on the purposes of standards and the processes for developing them used in other settings.

***Key supporting documentation:*** *Report on January, 2000 Consultancy by Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton, Appendix 3: Report on Egyptesol 2000.*

## **5. CDELTA Strategic Planning Meeting, February 11 – 12 2001**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey was invited to work with Dr. Zeinab el Naggar, the new director of CDELTA (Center for the Development of English Language Teaching) to plan and facilitate a 2-day strategic planning retreat at CDELTA. Her consultancy was sponsored by IELP-II.

**Purpose:** The goals were to review the past and present status of CDELTA, gather ideas and information toward developing CDELTA's future direction and develop a draft mission statement for the center.

**Attended by:** CDELTA Board of Directors and representatives of key stakeholder organizations including IELP-II, Egyptesol, the English Language Teaching office of the US Embassy, Cairo American University, and the Ministry of Education.

**Outcomes:** The meeting met all goals, and the final text of CDELTA's mission statement was published shortly after the meeting. It included the following paragraph:

*The mission of Center for Developing English Language Teaching, Ain Shams Faculty of Education (CDELTA) is to respond to Egypt's development and employment needs for individuals with high-level English language skills. We work with the Ministry of Education and Faculties of Education of Egypt to provide the highest quality, world-class English language programs and English language teacher education for Egypt. **This requires setting standards for English teaching agreed to by the Ministry, faculties and other partners across Egypt and developing programs to teach to those standards as well as means to ensure that the standards are met.***

**Key supporting documentation:** *Report by Mary Lou McCloskey on the CDELTA (Center for the Development of English Language Teaching) Strategic Planning Retreat February 11-12, 2001.*

## **6. STEPS Focus Group Planning Meeting, July 25, 2001**

**Event:** A meeting of the Standards development Core Group held at IELP-II was facilitated by Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton.

**Purpose:** The goals of the meeting were to establish organizational capacity and a framework for professional standards development by Egyptian FoE and MoE and to initiate the preservice English teacher education standards development process in Egypt.

**Attended by:** Barbara Thornton, Mary Lou McCloskey, Zeinab El Naggar, Raga Hanna, Magdi Mahdi, Sirvart Sahakian, Asmaa Mostafa, Amal Abou Hadid and Amal Nasrallah. Araxy Deronian of CDELT took minutes.

**Outcomes:** A work plan for the CDELT Steps Project was developed. The work plan included purpose; goals; and a time/task chart specifying tasks, who would do them, time frame, and means of verification.

**Key supporting documentation:** *CDELT STEPS Standards Work Plan Update, August 01, submitted with August 2001 Report by Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton; Minutes of the CDELT/STEPS meeting from Araxy Deronian, distributed to the group by Zeinab El Naggar.*

## **7. Teaching Practice Workshop, August – September 2001**

**Event:** Teaching Practice Workshops led by Linda New Levine and Norma Shapiro were held in Beni-Suef and Helwan.

**Purpose:** To upgrade teaching practice in Beni-Suef and Helwan.

**Attended by:** 50 Ministry and Faculty teaching practice supervisors from Beni Suef

**Outcome:** Participants wrote their own standards-based rubrics to assess student teachers at pre-service level. These rubrics were made use of in STEPS Workshops 1 and II

**Key Supporting Documentation:** *The rubrics were submitted by the consultants to the Activity Manager at IELP-II.*

## **8. Egyptesol Institute, January 24, 2002**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton presented on “The Role of Standards in Educational Reform” at an Institute held at the Ain Shams University Guest House. The event was co-sponsored by Egyptesol and IELP-II.

**Purpose:** (as stated in Institute publicity flyer)

*This seminar is for all those who have an interest in learning about performance standards and their applications in education in Egypt. Participants will have the opportunity to become familiar with the standards movement and to examine a number of questions including the following:*

- *What are the seven golden rules to follow when developing standards?*

- *What are the various kinds of standards? What are purposes and uses of these types of standards?*
- *What can we learn from other Standards projects?*
- *What is the history of standards development in the Egyptian context?*
- *How might standards be useful to us in a range of Egyptian contexts?*

After an introduction to standards, participants critically examined selections from standards documents and related writings from a range of educational contexts.

**Attended by:** About 50 educational leaders from ministry, faculties, government and private schools, US Department of State, USAID, EgypTesol, and Private Language Programs.

**Outcomes:** The meeting developed awareness regarding standards and inspired lively dialogue regarding what standards should be and how they should be developed. Dr. Zeinab El Naggar also described the STEPS program to date to participants, and Dr. Maysoun Omar outlined the Pharos project.

**Key supporting documentation:** *EgypTesol Institute Handouts on “The Role of Standards in Educational Reform,” submitted in the August 2001 Report by Barbara Thornton and Mary Lou McCloskey.*

## **9. STEPS Task Force Workshop I – January 2002**

**Event:** Workshop/meeting on standards development for STEPS Task Force Members at the Flamenco Hotel in Zamalek, Cairo.

**Purpose:** Overall Goals of the STEPS Project

1. Decide on overall performance domains that are suitable and applicable to the Egyptian pre-service context
2. Develop contextually appropriate performance standards for English majors in each of the agreed upon domains
3. Develop performance indicators for every standard to be used operationally in designing and evaluating teacher education programs for English majors at the Faculties of Education
4. Decide on the appropriate levels of performance for each standard (minimum, optimum and exceeding)
5. Train a cadre of specialists on the importance and applicability of these standards in the pre-service context

**Goals of the Workshop:**

1. Develop an understanding of the uses and purposes of standards
2. Determine initial process to be followed in developing and reaching consensus on performance standards and indicators through

- a. Reviewing the steps that other projects have used
- b. Discussing the strengths/weaknesses of these procedures for the current Egyptian context and purposes
- c. Outlining initial procedural steps for the STEPS project
3. Outline a work plan that fulfills the project aims and includes:
  - a. Short term goals
  - b. Determining a timeline for accomplishing goals over the 18-month project
  - c. Assigning of task force members and teams to their roles and tasks for the project
  - d. Determining task force training needs
4. Discuss and reach consensus with the task force on the domains that are applicable to the pre-service context in Egypt
5. Determine roles and responsibilities of task force members and teams
6. Establish effective communication channels and feedback mechanisms for the work in process
7. Start the development of performance standards for the first domains

**Attended by:** The list of task force members made available to consultants prior to the workshop included 31 representatives from 13 Faculties of Education. A total of 26 members of staff representing 11 Faculties of Education attended the Task Force Workshop. The attendees ranged in position from lecturers to full professors.

**Outcomes:**

- Membership was expanded fivefold to include many more faculty participants.
- Consultants highly recommend inclusion of Ministry representatives in the Task Force
- Pre-workshop tasks were included to expand Task Force participation between meetings.
- A Task Force Work Plan outlined to be distributed to the Task Force by IELP-II.
- Standard writing teams were identified based on content and regional preferences
- Task force members identified the need for Internet training specifically using the Internet for researching standards
- As a community-building activity, the Task Force developed a set of “rules” for how we would work together.
- A wide range of community building, consensus-building and decision-making strategies were used to develop a powerful group culture that included a strong work ethic, development of leadership skills among all, and the ability to collaborate and compromise to reach agreement on standards.

**Key supporting documentation:** *Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop I, January 2002.*

## **10. STEPS Follow-On Workshop I, April, 2002**

**Event:** A two-day follow-on workshop was led by Dr. Zeinab el Naggar and Dr. Maysoun Omar in April, 2002.

**Purpose:** The workshop was intended to help participants support one another in completing their standards and to review work already done to bring new members up to date.

**Attended by:** Members of STEPS Task Force.

**Outcomes:** The five domain teams drafted their standards by the deadline date before Workshop II.

**Key supporting documentation:** Email report on meeting by Nadia Touba.

## **11. CDEL T Symposium**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton presented a plenary address at the CDEL T Symposium on Developing Standards for Pre-Service Teachers in Egypt on April 24, 2002.

### **Purposes:**

The goals of the address were to:

- Describe a project underway in Egypt to develop Teacher Education standards
- Articulate processes for developing standards that promote
  - National ownership of standards
  - Development of the group processes and
  - Consensus-building skills
- Brief attendees on the history and current status of the STEPs project

**Attended by:** approximately 250 Egyptian educators, many of them previous participants in IELP-II activities.

**Outcomes:** 250 educators were briefed on STEPS project and the unique approach taken in this project to the standard setting process. Although there have been many standards activities in Egypt, this conference revealed that the concepts remain unfamiliar to many educators. After the presentation, a number of participants approached presenters to comment the clarity of the ideas presented and to state their enthusiasm about developing standards in Egypt.

## **12. STEPS Workshop II – Moving Ahead with Standards, April 2002**

**Event:** Workshop for STEPS Task Force Members at the Ain Shams Guest House, Cairo.

**Purpose:** The goals of Workshop II were:

1. Finalizing the definitions of the domains
2. Developing standards under each of the domains
3. Reaching consensus on the alignment and wording of the different sets of standards
4. Setting out a practical plan for the process of field discussion

**Attended by:** 25 representatives from Faculties of Education in Egypt.

**Outcomes:**

- Standards went through five further drafts.
- Ministry involvement was again strongly recommended.

**Key supporting documentation:** *Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop II, April, 2002.*

## **13. 5th Cairo Conference, April 2002**

Zeinab el Nagggar, Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton **Event:** presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Cairo Conference on April xx, 2002

**Purpose:** The presentation outlined the history, processes and current status of the STEPS project.

**Attended by:** Over 300 Egyptian Educators

**Outcomes:** Attendees were briefed on STEPS project and the rationale behind it.

**Key supporting documentation:** *Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop II, April 2002.*

## **14. STEPS Follow On-Workshop II, July 2002**

**Event:** A two-day workshop, led by Dr. Zeinab el Nagggar and Dr. Maysoun Omar, was held at the Flamenco Hotel in Cairo.

**Purposes:**

- To acquaint STEPS participants with the Pharos standards
- To work on the alignment of domains between STEPS and Pharos
- To give further support to task force members in the final drafting of standards

**Attended by:** 25 participants from Faculties of Education. Two original members of the Task Force dropped out because of other commitments and one new participant was included.

**Outcomes:** the Task Force produced a draft diagram aligning domains of STEPS and Pharos standards.

**Key supporting documentation:** *E-mail report by Nadia Touba.*

## **15. Ongoing Awareness-Raising Activities on STEPS by STEPS Task Force Participants**

### **E-Group:**

The e-group [cdeltsteps@yahoo.com](mailto:cdeltsteps@yahoo.com) was established in April, 2002.

**Participants:** Almost all members of the STEPS TASK Force, consultants and IELP-II Activity Manager have joined the group.

**Outcomes:** E-group is used for:

- Commenting on standards
- Exchanging standards with colleagues and with consultants
- Posting messages relating to upcoming events
- Discussing alignment of STEPS and Pharos standards
- Final decision made on alignment of standards

**Key supporting documentation:** *Texts of messages from e-group available from Eman Ghanem, e-group moderator.*

### **Event: Awareness-Raising by STEPS Task Force Members.**

Awareness-Raising Activities were conducted by STEPS Task Force members between April 2002 and September 2002.

**Participants:** STEPS Task Force Members and standards stakeholders in Egypt.

**Outcomes:** STEPS Task Force members contacted 1140 different individuals through STEPS awareness-raising activities between Workshops II and III. Activities ranged from 1-1 discussions with peers, to presentations at faculty meetings, discussions in courses, plenary presentations at conferences, etc.

**Key supporting documentation:** *Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop III, September 2002 "Appendix: Awareness-Raising Activities" lists all awareness-raising activities by Task Force members.*

## **16. STEPS WORKSHOP III: Refining Standards, Developing Indicators, Designing and Planning Field Review**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton facilitated a 6-day workshop at the Flamenco Hotel in Cairo.

**Purposes:**

1. Finalizing the definitions of the domains
2. Developing standards under each of the domains
3. Reaching consensus on the alignment and wording of the different sets of standards
4. Reaching consensus for the process of field review, using three instruments:
  - a. Interview forms and protocol
  - b. Survey form and protocol
  - c. On-line survey
5. Setting out a practical plan for the process of field discussion

**Attended by:** 27 members of the Task Force including two representatives from the Ministry of Education and two from the Program Planning and Monitoring Unit.

**Outcomes:**

- Online survey was made available through [www.mlmcc.info](http://www.mlmcc.info) -- (Click on “links”)
- Interview form was standardized and made ready for use
- Survey questionnaire form was standardized and made ready for use
- Criteria for selection of respondents was established
- Data analysis tools were identified

***Key supporting documentation:** Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop III, September 2002 includes an appendix listing all awareness-raising activities by Task Force members as well as the data collection instruments to be used for the field review.*

## **17. STEPS Workshop IV**

**Event:** Mary Lou McCloskey and Barbara Thornton facilitated a 6-day workshop in Cairo in February, 2003

**Purposes:**

1. Discuss with the task force the findings of the field review instruments
2. Reach consensus with the task force on final standards under each of the 5 domains
3. Reach consensus with the task force on a set of sample indicators for each standard
4. Discuss practical ways standards can be used in the field of education
5. Develop a simple presentation package for introducing standards with “dissemination training”
6. Guide the Task Force in developing dissemination action plans to work after IELP II phases out

**Attended by:** 19 members of the Task Force and one paid attendee assigned to attend the workshop by IELP-II.

**Outcomes:**

- Field Review was discussed and recommended changes integrated into standards
- Standards were finalized
- A list of terms to be included in the Glossary was identified
- Indicators were developed
- Dissemination “shows” were developed
- Participants wrote action plans for dissemination

***Key supporting documentation:*** *Report on STEPS Task Force Workshop IV, February 2003 includes appendices with report on Field Review, final standards and sample indicators, listing all awareness-raising activities by Task Force members as well as the data collection instruments to be used for the field review.*

## **Appendix 2: Standards for Standards Assessment Form**

**Domain Assessed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assess the standards by giving them a score on a scale of 1 (does not meet Standards for Standards at all) to 5 (clearly and completely meets Standard for Standards) for each criterion.**

### **Content**

- Is each standard important and inclusive in scope? (Would this standard be better as an indicator?)
- Does each standard clearly fit in the domain in which it is placed?
- Is each standard appropriate for preservice teachers in Egypt? Does each fit within what newly qualified [beginning] teachers in Egypt actually should know and be able to do?
- Do the standards cover the breadth of the content needed by teachers in this area?
- Do the standards include everything that our teachers need to know in that domain?

### **Clarity**

- Can student teachers, teachers, administrators, teacher educators all understand what each standard means?
- Are standards consistent across domains.

### **Correctness**

- Are the standards grammatically correct?
- Are the standards parallel in structure and appropriate in structure?
- Have we avoided sexist language?

## **Appendix 3: STEPS Glossary of Terms**

### **Standards, Rubrics and Exemplars: Key Terms**

**Achievement tests** tests designed to measure the things that a student knows and can do.

**Action plan** a plan to carry out a project. An action plan usually has separate sections, such as the goal, steps to meet goal, collaborators, responsibility timeline to accomplish steps, resources needed, plan for acquiring resources, evaluation plan.

**Additive rubric** in this rubric scoring system, each higher level includes all the descriptors of the lower levels, and adds additional descriptors.

**Analytic rubric** articulates levels of performance for more than one criterion so the teacher can assess student performance on each criterion. *(Mueller)*

**Assessment** analysis of classroom performance

**Classroom structure** classroom management routine, procedure, or process

**Content standards** statements that describe what students should know or be able to do within the content of a specific discipline or at the intersection of two or more disciplines (e.g., content standards in health or science might be: “students will describe effects of physical activity on the body”). *(Mueller)*

**Criteria** characteristics of good performance on a particular task. For example, criteria for a persuasive essay might include: *organization, clarity, and sufficient support for arguments*. (Note: The singular of criteria is criterion.) *(Mueller)*

**Descriptors** descriptions of performance at each level of each criterion on a rubric

**Developmental rubric** In this type of discrete rubric, each level shows qualitative (rather than additive) development on the criterion.

**Diagnostic test** a test designed to determine a student’s learning needs

**Differentiated instruction** instruction that takes into account the varying competencies of students in a classroom.

**Discrete rubric** In this rubric, each level has separate and discrete descriptors that are not additive.

**Domain** overarching area for development of standards. The STEPS standards were developed under the following five domains: Classroom Management, Language, Instruction, Assessment, and Professionalism.

**Evaluation** assessment that usually includes judgment of success of students, teachers, schools, programs over the long term.

**Exemplar (benchmark, anchor)** a sample performance at a particular level (or age, grade, stage of development) of a rubric that provides an interpretation of a performance standard. Exemplars provide a clear and stable reference point for giving feedback to students, educators, and the public in relation to standards. Exemplars give everyone a clear picture of targets and define levels of performance in concrete, meaningful, and public ways. Exemplars often include annotations that point out specific characteristics of a performance at that level. (*adapted from Carr & Harris, 2001*)

**Feedback** response to one's ideas (proposals, actions, etc.) in the form of approval, disapproval, suggestions

**Formal assessment** is used by teachers to gauge what students have learned at discrete points in the course of study. The term usually refers to the more traditional pen and paper assessment carried out at the end of a learning period. Formal assessment is usually planned in advance. Formal assessments can be used to evaluate student performance, teacher effectiveness, and school effectiveness. They can also be used by students and teachers to identify areas where more or different study, learning strategies, or instruction are needed. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Formative evaluation** is the process of collecting information throughout the course of study to help both teachers modify their teaching methods and materials and students to guide their subsequent learning. (*Pharos, 2003*)

**Holistic rubric** In contrast to an analytic rubric, a holistic rubric does not list separate levels of performance for each criterion. Instead, a holistic rubric assigns a level of performance by assessing performance across multiple criteria as a whole. An overall score is given for the project, demonstration, or performance. A variety of key elements may be addressed within each point level. (*Mueller*)

**Indicator** An indicator specifies a more specific performance that shows achievement of a standard.

**Informal assessment** typically refers to measures that teachers and students can use to check on progress, often spontaneously during the course of instruction. Informal assessments can include any class activity which assists teachers and students to determine the extent to which learning has taken place. They might include such measures as questions, checklists, journals, logs, etc. (*Pharos, 2003*)

**Likert Scale scoring** In this type of rubric scoring, performance or product is scored on a graduated scale, with level descriptions such as novice, apprentice, competent, exemplary or poor, fair, good, excellent. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Morphology** the study of the structure of words in a language including word endings and compound word formation.

**Needs analysis/assessment** is the process of assessing the needs of individuals, groups, or program. A needs assessment is typically used at the initial stages to plan for training intervention, instruction, materials and curriculum development, and/or evaluation. However, a needs analysis can also be ongoing. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Performance standards** Performance standards are concrete examples and explicit definitions of what students have to know and be able to do to demonstrate that such students are proficient in the skills and knowledge framed by content standards (Section 3, Goals 2000). Typically, two types of interrelated standards are distinguished: those that specify the content (what students should know or be able to do at different points in their education), and those that specify the performance (how well they should be able to do it). Ideally, performance standards indicate the type of evidence required to demonstrate fulfillment of content standards (e.g., essay, mathematical proof, scientific experiment, project, exam) as well as the quality of performance that will be deemed acceptable... [Robert L. Linn and Joan L. Herman, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST, A Policymaker 's Guide to Standards-Led Assessment, Education Commission of the States (ECS), February 1997. See also, National Education Goals Panel, Report of Goals 3 and 4 Technical Planning Group on the Review of Education Standards, Washington, DC, 1993.]

**Performance-based assessment** requires students to perform the actual task rather than simply answer questions out of context. It may call for doing a piece of writing for an actual purpose, or solving a mathematical or scientific problem for a "real-life" activity. The task is then judged against how successful the performance was, compared to the stated criteria. (*Assinboine, 1996*)

**Phonology** the study of sounds of speech, intonation and word and sentence stress in language

**Placement test** a test which is used to assign a student to the appropriate level or class

**Positive reinforcement** a strategy where teachers give positive responses to student responses or behaviors they wish to encourage or reinforce

**Pragmatics** the study of language as it is used in a social context

**Proficiency test** a language proficiency test is a test of one's ability to use a language with skill

**Qualitative methods** are assessment measures that a teacher may use to assess the quality of complex performances or products. Results cannot be reduced to a numerical score. Qualitative assessments usually require measures rely on teachers or students to score or judge student performance. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Quantitative methods** are assessment measures such as paper and pencil tests that teachers or schools use to measure student achievement. These methods give us results which can be reduced to numbers or quantified and therefore rely on having students respond in such formats as multiple choice and true/false. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Reflective practice** is an approach to teaching in which professionals examine their practice experiences as a basis for ongoing decision-making and ultimately as a source for change and professional growth. (*Pharos, 2003*)

**Reliability** is the extent to which a test provides dependable and consistent results. Results should be consistent across evaluators, across time, and across different tasks that measure the same thing. An assessment is reliable if the same responses receive the same scores no matter who does the scoring. Carr & Harris (2001) state the following issues as particularly relevant to establishing reliability:

- Criteria that are clear, do not overlap, and are taken directly from standards
- A scale that makes clear distinctions among its levels
- Performance descriptions that are specific, observable, and can be documented
- Exemplars of student work that illustrate levels of attainment
- Evidence of consistent judgment over time and across different individuals and groups

**Routine** refers to something which is done on a daily basis in class such as writing the date on the board or collecting books

**Rubric** an established set of parameters for scoring or rating performance on tasks. Rubrics list the targeted features (e.g., in writing, organization, fluency, word choice, grammar accuracy) for judging a performance (e.g., essay, dialog, speech, leadership task) and levels of expected outcomes. Good rubrics include a fixed measurement scale (often 4-point), a set of clear criteria, performance descriptions for each criterion at each point on the scale, and sample responses (exemplars) that illustrate various levels of performance. (*Adapted from Carr & Harris, 2001*)

**Self-directed learning** refers to a situation where the individual is actively involved in the learning process and feels responsible for the direction of his or her own learning

**Self-esteem** the sense of pride in oneself and self-respect that teachers wish to develop in students

**Semantics** the study of meaning in a language

**Stakeholders** are those impacted by the instructional program and/or concerned about the results. In the Egyptian setting, these may include students, teachers, parents, supervisors, principals, and members of the community, (*Pharos, 2003*)

**Standardized test** is one where the conditions for administration and scoring have a uniform procedure so that scores can be interpreted in a consistent manner regardless of when or where the test is taken. (*STEPS, 2003*)

**Standards** in education are statements that identify the essential knowledge and skills that should be acquired by students or student teachers in school. Essential knowledge is what students should know and includes the most important and enduring ideas, issues, dilemmas, principles and concepts from the disciplines. Essential skills are what students/teachers should be able to do. Skills are ways of thinking, working, communicating, and investigating. Standards also identify behaviors and attitudes related to success, such as providing evidence to back up assertions and developing productive, satisfying relationships with others. (*Adapted from Carr & Harris, 2001*)

**Standardized test** one where the conditions for administration and scoring have a uniform procedure so that scores can be interpreted in a consistent manner regardless of when or here the test is taken.

**Language structure** ways in which parts of words, words, and combinations of words are used in a language

**Summative evaluation** is the assessment of students' achievement or progress at the end of a course of study, i.e., at the end of the school term.

**Syntax** The rules whereby words or other elements of sentence structure are combined to form grammatical sentences

**Validity** is the indication of how well an assessment measures what it was intended to measure (e.g., does a test of laboratory skills really assess laboratory skills, or does it assess ability to read and follow instructions?) Technically, validity indicates the degree of accuracy of predictions or inferences based on an assessment measure. (*Arter & McTighe, 2001*).

## Appendix 4: References and Resources

Web Resources on Standards: Also see

<http://www.mindspring.com/~mlmcc/Standards-Web-Resources.html>

### Resources on Standards

- Ainsworth, L. & Christinson, J. (1998). *Student Generated Rubrics: An Assessment Model to Help all Student Succeed*. Parsippany, NJ, USA: Pearson Learning
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