



Programming language processors — Test methods — Guidelines for their development and acceptability

Processeurs de langage de programmation — Méthodes d'essai — Lignes directrices pour leur élaboration et acceptabilité

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work.

The main task of ISO technical committees is to prepare International Standards. In exceptional circumstances a technical committee may propose the publication of a technical report of one of the following types :

- type 1, when the necessary support within the technical committee cannot be obtained for the publication of an International Standard, despite repeated efforts;
- type 2, when the subject is still under technical development requiring wider exposure;
- type 3, when a technical committee has collected data of a different kind from that which is normally published as an International Standard ("state of the art", for example).

Technical reports are accepted for publication directly by ISO Council. Technical reports types 1 and 2 are subject to review within three years of publication, to decide if they can be transformed into International Standards. Technical reports type 3 do not necessarily have to be reviewed until the data they provide is considered no longer valid or useful.

ISO/TR 9547 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 97, *Information processing systems*.

This type 3 Technical Report has been prepared to provide guidelines for those developing test methods for programming languages and also to aid those developing the programming languages themselves. It should facilitate the preparation of specific test methods which will help implementors to produce standard-conforming language processors, thereby benefitting end users.

CONTENTS

0.	INTRODUCTION	3
1.	SCOPE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION	3
2.	DEFINITIONS	3
2.1	CONFIGURATION	3
2.2	EXTENSION	4
2.3	IMPLEMENTATION DEFINED	4
2.4	PROCESSOR	4
2.5	TEST	4
2.6	TEST METHOD	4
2.7	TEST PROGRAM	4
2.8	TEST REPORT	4
2.9	TEST SUITE	4
2.10	TEST TOOLS	4
2.11	REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	4
2.12	SUBSET	4
3.	OBJECT TO BE TESTED	4
4.	DESCRIPTION OF TEST METHODS	5
4.1	TEST SUITE	5
4.2	TEST TOOLS	6
4.3	TECHNICAL PROCEDURES	6
4.3.1	OVERALL SCHEME FOR THE TESTING	6
4.3.2	RELATED DOCUMENTATION	6
5.	GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEST METHODS	7
5.1	CONSIDERATION OF EXISTING TEST METHODS	7
5.2	CRITERIA FOR DESIGN OF TEST SUITES	7
5.3	TESTABILITY	8
5.4	LANGUAGE FEATURES NOT COVERED BY THE TEST SUITE	8
5.5	SUBSET TESTING	9
5.6	PORTABILITY REQUIREMENTS	9
5.7	TEST TOOLS	9
6.	MAINTENANCE AND REVISION OF TEST SUITES	9
7.	AVAILABILITY	9
8.	ACCEPTABILITY OF TEST METHODS	9
8.1	CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTABILITY OF THE TEST METHOD	9
8.2	REVISION OF THE TEST METHOD	10

0. INTRODUCTION

The programming language area is a living topic: new languages are developed, old ones are revised. In those two cases, conformity requirements should not be forgotten; therefore, test considerations should be included in the development of language standards and their revisions.

The aim of this document is to provide guidelines for the development of a test method based on a set of test programs and precise steps that should be taken in order for a test method to get formal approval from ISO. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with a given language standard so as to produce a specific test method for programming language processors.

These guidelines are written for test method developers and for those who will approve these test methods in ISO. The availability of specific test methods will help implementors in producing standard conforming language processors, thereby benefiting end users.

When reading these guidelines, it should be borne in mind that programming language standards have not yet reached a level of precision and completeness to allow conformity tests to be produced for every aspect and feature of a language described in a programming language standard. Testing issues are rarely the primary objective of standardization committees, and this may cause problems in applying these guidelines strictly to any given programming language standard.

1. SCOPE AND FIELD OF APPLICATION

These guidelines describe a methodology for determining whether a programming language processor possesses the required characteristics stated in the International Standard for the particular programming language for which it is intended.

Assessment of conformity of a language processor can be carried out with the "Test Suite Methodology". Other methodologies are not excluded but are not described here.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these guidelines, the following terms apply.

2.1 CONFIGURATION : host and target computers, any operating system(s) and software used to operate a processor.

- 2.2 EXTENSION : a facility in the implemented language that is not given in the language standard but that does not cause any ambiguity or contradiction when added to the language standard (although, in some languages, it may serve to lift a restriction).
- 2.3 IMPLEMENTATION DEFINED : dependent on the processor but required by the language standard to be defined and documented by the implementor.
- 2.4 PROCESSOR : a compiler, translator or interpreter working in combination with a configuration.
- 2.5 TEST : technical operation that consists of the determination of one or more characteristics of a given product, process or service according to a specified procedure. (ISO/IEC Guide 2-1986)
- 2.6 TEST METHOD : specified technical procedure for performing a test. (ISO/IEC Guide 2-1986)
- 2.7 TEST PROGRAM : a sequence of characters intended to be submitted to a processor in order to determine whether or not this processor exhibits a specific instance of a certain property.
- 2.8 TEST REPORT : document that presents test results and other information relevant to a test. (ISO/IEC Guide 2-1986)
- 2.9 TEST SUITE : a reference set of test programs that is designed to assess conformity of a processor with a language standard.
- 2.10 TEST TOOLS : any additional means that can improve the efficiency, the reliability and the ease of use of the different phases of testing (e.g. implementation of the test suite, ensuring integrity, processing of the test suite, collecting test results, analysis of test results, producing a test report).
- 2.11 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS : the set of documents required by the programming language standard.
- 2.12 SUBSET : a subset S of programming language L is a programming language such that every program in S
- is also a program in L and
 - has the same meaning in S as it has in L .

3. OBJECT TO BE TESTED

As a processor only works in combination with a configuration, some conditions should be taken into account.

3.1 The processor to be tested, including selected options, and the configuration relevant to the testing should be fully specified.