

Order 24/011/2011

**THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FINNISH
NATIONAL CERTIFICATES OF LANGUAGE
PROFICIENCY 2011**



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

© Finnish National Board of Education

ISBN 978-952-13-4965-2 (pb)

ISBN 978-952-13-4966-9 (pdf)

Layout Pirjo Nylund

Juvenes Print – Tampereen yliopistopaino Oy 2011



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Reg. No.	24/011/2011
ORDER	Binding
DATE	30.11.2011
Validity	From 1.12.2011 until further notice
Provisions on which the competence to issue the order are based:	Act 964/2004, Section 2 Decree 1163/2004, Section 5 Decree 1109/2011
Repeals order No	55/011/2001

Framework of the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency

The National Board of Education has decided on the Framework of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency Tests, which shall be observed from 1st December 2011 until further notice. The Language Proficiency Test Committee, the organizers of the tests, the test setters and examiners may not fail to comply with the Framework of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency Tests and may not deviate from them.

Director General

Timo Lankinen

Director

Jorma Kauppinen

Contents

1	Introduction	7
2	Contents of the examination	7
3	Language proficiency scale	8
4	Topic categories	9
5	Communication purposes	9
6	Test items in the National Certificates of Language Proficiency	10
6.1	Listening comprehension subtest	10
6.2	Speaking subtest	10
6.3	Reading comprehension subtest	11
6.4	Writing subtest	11
7	Assessing test performances	11
8	Certificates	12
9	Language testing for people with special needs	12
	Appendices	13
1	Descriptions of language proficiency levels	13
2	Topic categories	16
3	Language functions	19
4	Sample certificate	21

1 Introduction

The Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency is intended to measure the functional language proficiency of adults. The term “functional language proficiency” refers to how appropriately and fluently an individual is expected to manage various situations and tasks that require language comprehension and production.

The Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency examinations are taken at Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels. The test-takers themselves must choose the proficiency level at which they wish to participate. In terms of the proficiency level scales, the Basic level examination is set at levels 1–2, the Intermediate level examination at levels 3–4 and the Advanced level examination at levels 5–6.

All the tests in the examination consist of four subtests: listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing. Test performances are assessed according to the assessment criteria and the test-takers will receive a certificate that contains a numerically expressed language proficiency profile, i.e. a separate proficiency assessment for each of the four subtests.

The certificates are comparable across different languages so that proficiency levels correspond to the same functional language proficiency.

It is possible for test-takers to demonstrate their language proficiency with the test regardless of how they have acquired their proficiency.

2 Contents of the examination

The role of the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency is to test the ability to communicate in a foreign or a second language. The tests should be designed with a view to measuring language proficiency in situations similar to those a language user will encounter in various communication contexts. The contents of the examination are determined in accordance with the topic categories and language communication purposes, i.e. functions, presented in this framework. The definitions of language proficiency correspond to international examinations that test communicative language proficiency.

3 Language proficiency scale

The Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency uses a language proficiency scale to describe the development of language proficiency. Language proficiency assessments are made using a six-point proficiency level scale, which is commensurate with the proficiency level scale in the Common European Framework developed by the Council of Europe. The language proficiency scale can be adapted to other purposes not directly connected with the examination. For example, an employer may use the scale to determine what level of language proficiency is required for various duties. Training planners can use the scale when drawing up course curricula. The test-takers can also set the goals in accordance with the scale and utilise it as a self-assessment tool.

In addition to the scale, it is advisable that test-takers acquaint themselves with the topic categories and language functions, which have been separately defined for each test level (Basic, Intermediate, Advanced).

The following is a description of the six-point proficiency level scale, which is adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages for National Certificates of Language Proficiency:

6 → Understands a wide range of spoken and written language without difficulty. Experiences only occasional difficulties with subtle differences of tone and nuance in expressions. Speaks and writes extremely fluently in a contextually appropriate style, and is able to express even subtle nuances of meaning. Has a solid command of grammar and vocabulary in almost all situations; even small inaccuracies are rare.

5 → Understands all kinds of speech at a normal tempo, even though comprehension sometimes requires a certain amount of effort if the subject matter or the way it is handled is unfamiliar. Understands structurally and linguistically complex texts and contemporary literature. Speaks and writes clearly and fluently on various topics, but the use of less common vocabulary and complex sentence structures may, however, cause difficulties.

4 → Understands normal tempo speech on general topics, but some details may not be understood. Fast spoken language and dialects, however, cause difficulties. Has no difficulty understanding texts dealing with general topics, although some nuances conveyed in the text may not be clear. Copes fairly well in a variety of both official and unofficial speech situations. Is able to write both private and semi-official texts and to express thoughts as a coherent whole.

3 → Understands longer stretches of speech and the central idea from many TV and radio programmes if the topic area is relatively familiar and the speech tempo is normal. Understands ordinary everyday texts but more demanding texts with unfamiliar subject matter may cause difficulties. Can cope in the most common speech situations and is able to write simple, coherent text on every-

day topics, even though grammatical and lexical inaccuracies may occasionally hinder comprehension.

2 → Understands clear and simplified speech dealing with everyday, familiar matters. Understands with ease short, simple messages and gets the gist of texts dealing with everyday topics. Copes with routine speech situations requiring simple exchanges of information, even though pronunciation or general language skills may still be defective. Is capable of writing concise, simple texts about everyday matters, but the text may be fragmented.

1 → Understands in slow and clear speech simple basic expressions that are directly related to the learner's own life or concern the immediate concrete environment. Is able to retrieve information from simple, short texts. Copes with the very simplest speech situations, but speech is slow and very disjointed, with possibly defective pronunciation and/or language skills. Is capable of writing extremely short texts that contain numerous linguistic defects.

Detailed descriptions of the scale for each subtest are given in Appendix 1.

4 Topic categories

The topic categories in Basic, Intermediate, Advanced tests are the same, but the level of proficiency required varies. The list below covers the main topics of the examination:

- A Personal identification
- B Home and living
- C Retail and services
- D Culture
- E Travel
- F Health and well-being
- G Work
- H Environment
- I Society

A more detailed list of topics, broken down according to the three test levels, is included in Appendix 2.

5 Communication purposes

The communication purposes, i.e. functions, are the same at all test levels, only the extent and variety of expression required vary according to the language proficiency level. While at the Basic level it is important that the test-takers are able to convey their message at least in a rudimentary and brief

form, at Intermediate level they are expected to express the functions in a more natural and appropriate manner. At Advanced level, they should be capable of expressing the functions effectively, naturally and appropriately according to the context. The following list presents the key language functions in the tests.

- A Giving and asking for factual information
- B Expressing opinions and attitudes
- C Expressing and enquiring about emotions
- D Dealing with transactional activities
- E Acting according to social norms and customs
- F Communication strategies

Appendix 3 describes the functions according to the three test levels.

6 Test items in National Certificates of Language Proficiency

The examinations at the three levels of the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency consist of four subtests: listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing. In the Basic and Intermediate level tests, the speaking test is administered in a language laboratory; the Advanced level test includes a face-to-face interview in addition to the studio test. However, the Basic speaking subtests in Swedish and Finnish also take the form of an interview.

6.1 Listening comprehension subtest

The tasks for listening comprehension include conversations, interviews, answering machine messages, announcements, news items, reports and advertisements. Each test comprises several different listening tasks. The questions related to understanding are focused on understanding the main points, details and larger wholes. The tasks will be listened to once or twice. The difficulty of the materials listened to, e.g. the vocabulary, tempo of the speech and topics as well as the level of difficulty of the questions are tailored to fit the test level.

6.2 Speaking subtest

At Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels, speaking proficiency is assessed in a language laboratory (with the exception of Basic level Swedish and Finnish), for example, by participating in simulated conversations, reacting to given social situations and by expressing an opinion or talking at length on a given topic. In addition, the Advanced level subtest in all languages and Basic level Swedish and Finnish includes a face-to-face interview. All the test-takers' answers in the lan-

guage laboratory as well as interviews in Basic level Swedish and Finnish are recorded, and the Advanced level interviews are videotaped for assessment. The degree of difficulty of the speaking assignments, including the vocabulary, topics and language functions, are tailored to fit the test level.

6.3 Reading comprehension subtest

The text types used in the reading comprehension subtest include letters, messages, notices, advertisements, news items and stories. During each test, various different texts of varying lengths are used. Comprehension is demonstrated primarily by answering questions related to the content of the texts. The questions related to understanding are focused on understanding the main points, details and larger wholes. The difficulty of the reading materials, e.g. the vocabulary, tempo of the speech and topics and the level of difficulty of the questions are tailored to fit the test level.

6.4 Writing subtest

The writing subtest comprises three different types of writing assignments, for example, a letter, opinion piece, complaint or application. The assignments are guided and they may include additional source material. The degree of difficulty of the writing assignments, including the vocabulary, topics and language functions are tailored to fit the test level.

7 Assessing test performances

The National Certificates of Language Proficiency tests are based on the six-point language proficiency scale. The individual test items are compiled in accordance with the content specifications of the skill levels to maximise the reliability in assessing test-takers' language proficiency.

Comprehension items are scored in points which are converted into proficiency assessments. Performance is assessed with reference to the criteria, i.e. directly on the basis of assessment criteria based on the proficiency level scale. Criterion-referenced assessment means that the performance is compared directly to the skill level criteria, not to other performances.

The persons assessing the performance are specifically trained for the task. The uniformity of assessment is supported by means of continuous training, feedback on assessment and statistical analyses. In order to ensure equal treatment of test-takers, the assessor must not be the test-taker's own teacher or close relative.

8 Certificates

A certificate is awarded to anyone completing the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency. The certificate contains a separate proficiency level assessment for each subtest (listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing). Details of the language proficiency scale are provided on the back of the certificate. In the case of the Basic level test, the language proficiency assessment can be *less than 1*, 1 or 2; at Intermediate level *less than 3*, 3 or 4; and at Advanced level *less than 5*, 5 or 6. If the test-taker has totally omitted a particular subtest, or has only partly completed it, this will be indicated on the certificate as 'cannot be assessed'.

9 Language testing for people with special needs

The Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency tests are open to people with special needs; for example, those with dyslexia, hearing impairments and visual impairments. When enrolling for the examination, a person with special needs should present the appropriate doctor's certificate. In addition to a doctor, the certificate can be issued by a special needs teacher or psychologist. The certificate should contain information on how the disorder in question hinders the taking of the examination.

Test-takers with special needs take the same test as other participants. When required, special test arrangements may include more time to complete the assignments, release from filling in the optical form and the option to take the test in a separate room, on a computer or using enlarged text. Special test arrangements are applied for at the time of enrolling to the test.

Regardless of the special arrangements, the test performance is assessed using the same criteria used in assessing the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency tests in general. People using sign language can be freed from the speaking and listening comprehension subtests.

Descriptions of language proficiency levels

Basic level proficiency descriptions

Listening comprehension

1 → Understands from slow and clear speech simple basic expressions that are directly related to the learner's own life or concern the immediate concrete environment. Understands the main idea expressed in short, clear and simple messages and announcements.

2 → Understands fairly slow, clear and simplified speech dealing with familiar everyday matters. Understands, for example, easily distinguished items of information and instructions as well as details related to familiar and uncomplicated topics. Long passages of speech and extended blocks of information may, however, be difficult to understand.

Speaking

1 → Is able to ask and reply to simple questions dealing with immediate everyday needs and is able to use the most common phrases. Copes with the very simplest speaking tasks, but communication can be slow and/or very fragmented or difficult to understand. May be obliged to resort to a great deal of non-verbal means in order to be understood.

2 → Copes with routine speaking situations that require a simple exchange of information. Nevertheless, the speaker's language proficiency considerably restricts the range of subjects that the speaker can process. Successful communication of a message presupposes that the interlocutor is willing to help the speaker in forming the message. Pronunciation and/or language skills may deviate from the target language norm, thus requiring special effort from the interlocutor and impeding successful communication.

Reading comprehension

1 → Understands some things from easy-to-understand and simple texts. Experiences no difficulty in understanding simple sentences, basic expressions and familiar words in notices and messages and on menus, for example.

2 → Experiences no difficulty in understanding short, simple texts. Understands the main points in passages dealing with familiar, everyday topics and can extract some ideas from texts dealing with general topics.

Writing

1 → Is capable of writing extremely short texts, such as messages, postcards and a few simple phrases about him or herself. The text is very limited and/or fragmented in content and contains serious structural errors, even though parts of it are comprehensible.

2 → Is capable of writing brief, simple texts on everyday topics. The text may, however, be fragmented and contain expressions that are difficult to understand.

Intermediate level proficiency descriptions

Listening comprehension

3 → Understands longer stretches of speech if the topic is relatively familiar. Understands the gist of ordinary speech, for example, in many TV and radio programmes dealing with current affairs and using clear and normal tempo speech. However, normal tempo speech can occasionally present difficulties if the topic is unfamiliar or in the case of an extended stretch of speech.

4 → Understands normal tempo speech on general topics in varied situations, such as face-to-face conversations or while listening to the radio, with only details possibly remaining incomprehensible. Abstract topics, rapid colloquial speech and dialectal speech may impede comprehension.

Speaking

3 → Copes with the most familiar practical speech situations and is able to take the initiative in everyday language use situations. Speech can be fairly slow but there are few unnatural interruptions. Is comprehensible despite deficiencies in grammar and/or pronunciation.

4 → Copes fairly well in both formal and informal speech situations and is able to make a distinction in speech, at least to some extent, between formal and informal registers. Is able to present and justify opinions in a comprehensible manner and describe sights, sounds and experiences. Is obliged only rarely to use circumlocutions in everyday communication because of inadequate language proficiency.

Reading comprehension

3 → Understands ordinary everyday texts that do not require knowledge of the subject. Can understand the main points of even fairly long texts but parts of more demanding texts may remain incomprehensible. Less familiar topics may cause difficulties.

4 → Understands texts dealing with general topics with ease. Understands the main content of a text, identifies the central links between parts of the text and is able to make inferences on the basis of the text. Some details or nuances of the text may remain unclear.

Writing

3 → Is able to produce simple, coherent text on general topics. The content of the text is for the most part comprehensible but some unclear expressions, inconsistencies or structures not idiomatic to the target language at times interrupt the reading rhythm or impede comprehension.

4 → Is able to write both private and semi-official texts and to express thoughts as a coherent whole. Can express his or her views relatively widely and emphasise the central points of what is being said. Distinguishes between formal and informal registers but there may be occasional clumsy expressions.

Advanced level proficiency descriptions

Listening comprehension

5 → Understands all kinds of speech at a normal tempo, even though comprehension sometimes requires a certain amount of effort if the subject matter or the way it is handled is unfamiliar, or if the connections between items of information are only hinted at and are not precisely expressed. Understands complicated instructions and is capable of following complex argumentation, if the topic is relatively familiar. Dialectal forms cause some degree of difficulty.

6 → Has no difficulty understanding all kinds of spoken language, even in the case of a native speaker talking rapidly, provided some time is allowed for familiarisation with the accent. Dialects and subtle nuances of meaning may, however, cause difficulties.

Speaking

5 → Speaks fluently without frequent obvious need to search for an expression. Delivery characterised by naturalness, coherence and appropriate length. Is able to present a clear and detailed description of even a complex topic. Can use idiomatic and everyday expressions and is able to express nuances fairly well, even though the use of less common vocabulary and complex sentence structures may cause difficulties.

6 → Speech characterised by extreme fluency and only occasionally by non-native features, such as a foreign accent. Is capable of expressing even subtle nuances of meaning with precision, make varied and appropriate use of idiomatic expressions and vary the speech linguistically and with regard to the content in an appropriate manner.

Reading comprehension

5 → Experiences virtually no difficulty in understanding structurally and linguistically complex texts and contemporary literature. However, nuances of meaning and tone may sometimes cause comprehension difficulties.

6 → Understands practically all kinds of written text. Is capable of distinguishing stylistic variation but nuances of meaning conveyed by rare expressions may sometimes cause difficulty.

Writing

5 → Can write clear, detailed and fluent text on a variety of topics in an appropriate style. Is capable of stating and justifying an opinion even on a demanding subject. May nevertheless experience some difficulty in using less common vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

6 → Is capable of writing very fluent texts in a variety of registers with only occasional non-native features. Can write structurally logical and linguistically idiomatic texts with a varied content in a rich and appropriate style.

Appendix 2

Topic categories

The following topic division applies to all subtests (listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing). An individual test, however, may cover only a few of the topics presented below.

<i>Topic categories</i>	<i>Basic level</i>	<i>Intermediate level</i>	<i>Advanced level</i>
A Personal identification			
The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing: * personal information (name – also spelled out, phone number, gender, age, place and time of birth) * nationality * family and friends * pets * educational background, language skills * occupation, place of employment, unemployment * appearance, personality * hobbies and personal interests (culture, sports)	At least by naming, briefly, using basic expressions and phrases	More thoroughly and flexibly than at the previous level	More extensively and with more depth than at the previous levels
B Home and living			
The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing: * place of residence * living (forms of housing, rooms, furniture) * place of residence (town/countryside, services, comfort, recreational facilities) * living conditions and housing policy * safety and security of living	At least by naming, briefly, using basic expressions and phrases	More thoroughly and flexibly than at the previous level	More extensively and with more depth than at the previous levels
C Retail and services			
The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing: * shopping and using services (bank, post office, restaurant, insurance institutions, department stores) * feedback related to shopping and services (thanking, complaining) * measurements (currencies, prices, size, weight) * forms of payment * opening hours	In broad outline, at least by naming, matters related to one's own life in a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases	More thoroughly and flexibly, and on matters related to one's own life	At a more abstract level of comparison and analysis than at the previous levels
D Culture			
The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing: * sports (various disciplines, top level sports, recreational sports) * art (visual arts, theatre, literature) * music (different styles of music, meaning of music) * folk and national traditions	In familiar situations, using basic expressions and phrases, mainly orally	In addition to the previous level, and in semi-formal situations	In addition to the previous levels, and in formal situations as a representative of his or her employer or country

<i>Topic categories</i>	<i>Basic level</i>	<i>Intermediate level</i>	<i>Advanced level</i>
D Culture <i>continued</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * food (traditional foods, eating habits) * library * popular culture (TV programmes, commercials, various media) * religions and beliefs 			
E Travel			
<p>The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * finding out about the destination and accommodation options * travel and accommodation arrangements, travel insurance * public transport (enquiring about departure and arrival times, buying a ticket, choosing a route and mode of travel) * announcements and signs in vehicles, at customs and public buildings * arrival to and departure from a country * at a hotel * excursions, work-related visits and training events * giving instructions and driving directions, traffic signs and regulations * vehicle hire and maintenance * presenting a travel destination and giving advice * dealing with problems: loss of luggage, theft, accidents 	Mainly understanding and briefly presenting key facts using basic vocabulary	Coping independently with travel arrangements	In addition to the previous levels, taking responsibility or presenting to fellow travellers
F Health and well-being			
<p>The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * physical and psychological well-being * parts of the body * illness (seeking help, visit to the doctor, hospital) * accidents, illnesses and visiting a pharmacy * acting in emergency situations * healthcare * health education * lifestyle * instructions (medication, rehabilitation, exercise) 	At least by naming, briefly, using basic expressions and phrases	More thoroughly than at the previous level	With greater flexibility and precision than at the previous levels
G Work			
<p>The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * basic information (place of employment, fellow workers, working hours, work satisfaction) * daily routine (length of working day, phases, breaks, leisure time, monitoring time at work) * annual work cycle (working periods, holidays) * work experience (description of duties, required qualifications) * language proficiency required at work * one's own occupation, field and related fields 	At least by naming, briefly, using basic expressions and phrases	More thoroughly and flexibly than at the previous level	In addition to the previous levels, more extensively at a general level <i>continued</i>

<i>Topic categories</i>	<i>Basic level</i>	<i>Intermediate level</i>	<i>Advanced level</i>
<p>G Work <i>continued</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * pay, prestige, atmosphere and job satisfaction * career development and career-related aspirations * safety at work and ergonomics * employment and unemployment * trade union activity (pay and job-related benefits) * meetings and negotiations 			
<p>H Environment</p> <p>The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * nature and environment * weather, climate, seasons * natural resources * issues related to nature and environmental conservation * recycling and sorting * ecological issues * natural catastrophes and disasters * animals (species, conditions, behaviour) * plants (species, living conditions, utilisation) * agriculture (farming, animal husbandry) 	Describing briefly and simply	Understanding of broader concepts and describing conditions of one's own country at general level	At a more abstract level of comparison and analysis (using general knowledge)
<p>I Society</p> <p>The test-taker has to be able to discuss the following topics both verbally and in writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * population (demographics, history) * location of the country (neighbouring countries, international contacts) * education system (goals, functions, types of educational institutions) * language policy * political system (structure, functioning, elections, government) * history (key periods and their impact) * economic life (main means of livelihood, labour markets, private consumption, public economy, taxation, the EU, globalisation) * social security system (structure, functioning) * legal system (the judicial system, human rights, legislation) * equality (between the sexes, various regions, minorities) * technology (development, applications, impact) * accidents and crime 	Mainly understanding and briefly describing key facts, using basic vocabulary	Understanding of also broader concepts and describing the conditions of one's own country at a general level	At a more abstract level of comparison and analysis than the previous levels (using general knowledge)

Language functions

The following language functions apply to all subtests (listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing). An individual test, however, may cover only a few of the topics presented below.

<i>Topic categories</i>	<i>Basic level</i>	<i>Intermediate level</i>	<i>Advanced level</i>
A Giving and asking for factual information,			
for example: * stating, naming * reporting, describing, narrating * giving and asking for an explanation, correction and clarification * asking, enquiring * informing * answering in the affirmative and negative	In a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases	In a more thorough and natural manner; socially more appropriate use in terms of degree of formality	At a more abstract level, also in official contexts
B Expressing opinions and attitudes,			
for example: * expressing and asking for opinions * arguing for and against something * agreeing, accepting a statement * disagreeing, disputing a statement * expressing knowledge or ignorance of something * expressing and enquiring about levels of certainty/uncertainty * expressing positivity or negativity	In a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases	In a more thorough and natural manner; socially more appropriate use in terms of degree of formality	At a more abstract level, also in official contexts
C Expressing and enquiring about emotions,			
for example: * expressing joy, pleasure, satisfaction and hope * expressing sorrow, displeasure, dissatisfaction and despair * expressing indecisiveness, disappointment, anger, concern and fear * expressing boredom and frustration * expressing compassion * expressing surprise * expressing gratitude * expressing approval and disapproval	In a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases	In a more thorough and natural manner; socially more appropriate use in terms of degree of formality	Use of expressions that are more varied, nuanced and precise
D Dealing with transactional activities,			
for example: * purchasing and dealing with public officials * requesting and placing orders * arranging, confirming and cancelling appointments * requesting and giving advice and information * requesting and offering help * requesting and giving permission * inviting * reminding, warning * encouraging	In a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases	More precise and socially more appropriate use in terms of degree of formality	Even more nuanced realisation, also use in official contexts (e.g. meetings, negotiations)

<i>Topic categories</i>	<i>Basic level</i>	<i>Intermediate level</i>	<i>Advanced level</i>
E Acting according to social norms and customs,			
for example: * greetings and saying goodbye * addressing and responding to being addressed * introducing oneself and someone else * apologising and regretting * thanking * expressing and responding to compliments and congratulations * sending and passing on regards * politely declining	Mainly in familiar situations; in a limited manner, somewhat socially appropriately, using basic expressions and phrases	Socially more appropriate realisation, in familiar and semi-formal situations	Even more nuanced; in addition, in official contexts, such as in representative roles
F Communication strategies,			
for example: * directing attention * interrupting politely, entering a conversation * asking for and providing clarification, repetition, and spelling aloud * signalling successful comprehension and problems in comprehension * correcting an expression, being more specific * hesitating and using discourse particles	In a limited manner, using basic expressions and phrases, without distinguishing between nuances	As a more natural part of communication	Naturally and with nuances

Sample certificate

English

This is to certify that N N (16.02.1958) has participated in the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency examination in the English language at Intermediate level. The grades awarded for each subtest at this level are 3-4. Assessment of language proficiency in the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency examinations is based on a six-point scale, which is described on the reverse of this certificate. The proficiency level scale of the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency corresponds to the scale of the Common European Framework (CEFR).

On the basis of the test performance the test-taker's language proficiency has been assessed as follows:

Listening comprehension	3
Speaking	3
Reading comprehension	4
Writing	3

Test organizer:
Folk high school

In Helsinki, 28.1.2012

M M
Chair, Language Proficiency Test Committee

**This is a text model
of the certificate**

This test is based on Act 964/2004 and statutes 1163/2004 and 1109/2011, relating to the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency examinations.

A person completing the Intermediate level examination of The Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency has taken part in a language proficiency examination consisting of the following subtests: listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing.

The Intermediate level examination requires, for example, the ability to:

- cope with familiar and semi-official speech situations and to express opinions
- understand the main contents of, for example, conversations and news clips with subjects of topical interest
- understand the main contents of, for example, newspaper articles, newsletters and instructions
- write personal or semi-official texts
- demonstrate a command of key vocabulary and structures.

Proficiency level descriptions		CEFR scale
Advanced level	6 Understands a wide range of spoken and written language without difficulty. Experiences only occasional difficulties with subtle differences of tone and nuance in expressions. Speaks and writes extremely fluently in a contextually appropriate style, and is able to express even subtle nuances of meaning. Has a solid command of grammar and vocabulary in almost all situations; even small inaccuracies are rare.	C 2
	5 Understands all kinds of speech at a normal tempo, even though comprehension sometimes requires a certain amount of effort if the subject matter or the way it is handled is unfamiliar. Understands structurally and linguistically complex texts and contemporary literature. Speaks and writes clearly and fluently on various topics, but the use of less common vocabulary and complex sentence structures may, however, cause difficulties.	C 1
Intermediate level	4 Understands normal tempo speech on general topics, but some details may not be understood. Fast spoken language and dialects, however, cause difficulties. Has no difficulty understanding texts dealing with general topics, although some nuances conveyed in the text may not be clear. Copes fairly well in a variety of both official and unofficial speech situations. Is able to write both private and semi-official texts and to express thoughts as a coherent whole.	B 2
	3 Understands longer stretches of speech and the central idea from many TV and radio programmes if the topic area is relatively familiar and the speech tempo is normal. Understands ordinary everyday texts but more demanding texts with unfamiliar subject matter may cause difficulties. Can cope in the most common speech situations and is able to write simple, coherent text on everyday topics, even though grammatical and lexical inaccuracies may occasionally hinder comprehension.	B 1
Basic level	2 Understands clear and simplified speech dealing with everyday, familiar matters. Understands with ease short, simple messages and gets the gist of texts dealing with everyday topics. Copes with routine speech situations requiring simple exchanges of information, even though pronunciation or general language skills may still be defective. Is capable of writing concise, simple texts about everyday matters, but the text may be fragmented.	A 2
	1 Understands in slow and clear speech simple basic expressions that are directly related to the learner's own life or concern the immediate concrete environment. Is able to retrieve information from simple, short texts. Copes with the very simplest speech situations, but speech is slow and very disjointed, with possibly defective pronunciation and/or language skills. Is capable of writing extremely short texts that contain numerous linguistic defects.	A 1

The proficiency level scale of the Finnish National Certificates of Language Proficiency is empirically linked to the scale of the Common European Framework (CEFR).