SESSION XI

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS:

LANGUAGES AND SYSTEMS

RICHARD MILLWARD, *Brown University, Presider*

Standards: Principles, experience, and prospects

RICHARD MILLWARD
Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island 02912

This symposium deals with the current status of efforts to promulgate standards for extensions of programming languages, data bases, and hardware. The symposium deals with three aspects of standards as they affect psychologists and others attempting to do research and teach using real-time computers. The general tone of the presentations includes evaluations of current efforts, examples of actual problems encountered in practice, and alternatives to the development of standards. Standards, when applied to such products as real-time software and hardware, can become a two-edged sword. On the one hand, standards provide such benefits as clarity, efficiency, and accuracy in the utilization and dissemination of software and hardware systems. On the other hand, strict adherence to standards can potentially restrict one's concern to only the most trivial problems. The symposium explores both the positive and negative aspects of standards balanced by specific examples of experiences with the transportability of computer-based materials from one system to many others.