ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

General Description:
The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview, or OPI, as it is often called, is a valid and reliable testing method that measures how well a person speaks a language. It is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability, i.e., it measures language production holistically by determining patterns of strengths and weaknesses. The interview is interactive and continuously adapts to the interests and the abilities of the candidate. Through a series of personalized questions a sample of speech is elicited and rated according to the proficiency levels described in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking (Revised 1999).

The OPI assesses language proficiency in terms of the speaker’s ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations. It is not concerned with nor address when, where, why, or the way in which a speaker has acquired his/her language. The OPI is not an achievement test assessing a speaker’s acquisition of specific aspects of a language and/or vocabulary. The OPI does not compare one individual’s performance to others, but each individual performance to the assessment criteria in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking (Revised 1999.)

Test Length: 20-30 minutes.

Test Format: A live telephonic interview between an ACTFL Certified Tester and a candidate, which is tape-recorded by the Tester. It resembles a conversation between two people but, in fact, follows a strict, standarded structure and elicitation protocol.

Test Content: Content is adapted to the candidate’s professional and academic experiences, as well as any special skills or interests. The OPI also includes a role-play. Content areas and/or role-play may be customized by the client.

Rating: A criterion referenced test. The ACTFL Certified Tester compares the speech produced by the candidate in the interview to the criteria as described in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking (Revised 1999); one of ten possible ratings is assigned.

Languages: Afrikaans, Albanian, Armenian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Cebuano, Chavacano, Croatian, Czech, Dari, Dutch, Egyptian, English, Filipino, Flemish, French, German, Georgian, Modern Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hmong, Ilokano, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Javanese, Khmer, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Norwegian, Pashto, Persian Farsi, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Serbian, Slovak, Somali Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tamil, Tausug, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu and Vietnamese

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