OPI Familiarization
Facts or Myths?

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University of Chicago
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Outline

- Common Myths: (Brainstorming)
- Historical Overview of two OPI systems
- Facts: OPI standards: ILR & ACTFL
- OPI Practices: ILR & ACTFL
- Application & Implication of OPI
Common Myths

- Subjectivity
- Reliability: Inter- and Intra- Tester Reliability
- Validity
- ???
# Historical Overview: Evolution of ACTFL & ILR Testing System

The first 50 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1950’s</th>
<th>1980’s</th>
<th>1990’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ILR (US Government)</td>
<td>ACTFL OPI</td>
<td>ACTFL MOPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Novice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Proficiency and Achievement Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on “DO”</td>
<td>Focus on “KNOW”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>Specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlimited material</td>
<td>Limited material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion-referenced</td>
<td>Norm-referenced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                   |                           |...
OPI standards: ACTFL

- A global assessment of functional speaking ability/proficiency
- An interactive, adaptive, and learner-centered assessment
- A criterion-referenced, not a norm-referenced assessment
- Standardized structure
  - 4 phases: warm-up, level checks, probes, wind-down
- Four major categories of criteria assessment
  - Global tasks, contents, accuracy, text types
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level*</th>
<th>Global Tasks and Functions</th>
<th>Context / Content</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Text Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Discuss topics extensively, support opinions and hypothesize. Deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation.</td>
<td>Most formal and informal settings / Wide range of general interest topics and some special fields of interest and expertise.</td>
<td>No pattern of errors in basic structures. Errors virtually never interfere with communication or distract the native speaker from the message.</td>
<td>Extended discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Narrate and describe in major time frames and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication.</td>
<td>Most informal and some formal settings / Topics of personal and general interest.</td>
<td>Understood without difficulty by speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.</td>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Create with language, initiate, maintain, and bring to a close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions.</td>
<td>Some informal settings and a limited number of transactional situations / Predictable, familiar topics related to daily activities.</td>
<td>Understood, with some repetition, by speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.</td>
<td>Discrete sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists and phrases.</td>
<td>Most common informal settings / Most common aspects of daily life.</td>
<td>May be difficult to understand, even for speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.</td>
<td>Individual words and phrases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPI standards: ILR

- A global assessment of functional speaking ability/proficiency
- An interactive, adaptive, and learner-centered assessment
- A criterion-referenced, not a norm-referenced assessment
- Standardized structure
  - 4 phases: warm-up, level checks, probes, wind-down
- Six rating factors
  - Global tasks/functions, lexical control, structural control, delivery, text produced
# Rating Factors-Speaking (ILR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Factor</th>
<th>Global Tasks &amp; Functions</th>
<th>Lexical Control</th>
<th>Structural Control</th>
<th>Sociolinguistic Competence</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Texts produced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0+</td>
<td>Memorized material</td>
<td>Memorized words &amp; phrases</td>
<td>No control use memorized structures</td>
<td>Severely limited</td>
<td>Stress, inton. tone usually quite faulty</td>
<td>Words &amp; phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Can create sentences; ask &amp; answer ques.</td>
<td>limited to daily routine, personal</td>
<td>Struc. accuracy random; time concepts vague</td>
<td>Greetings &amp; courtesy expres.</td>
<td>Generally poor pronun. Stress, inton.</td>
<td>Discrete sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describ. Physi. narrate, giving direction &amp; instruction</td>
<td>Work, family, travel, background, current events,</td>
<td>Minimally cohesive discourse; errors frequent, but basic gram. controlled</td>
<td>Routine social demands; can interact native speakers not used to dealing with non-natives</td>
<td>Speaks with confidence but not facility</td>
<td>Full paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Can converse extensively in formal &amp; informal situations</td>
<td>Practical, social, and professional topics; abstract topics</td>
<td>Cohesive discourse; errors never interfere communication</td>
<td>Uses cultural references</td>
<td>Pronunciation obviously foreign, but stress, inton., pitch rarely disturb the native speaker</td>
<td>Extended discourse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Rating Factors-Speaking (ILR) continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Global Tasks &amp; Functions</th>
<th>Lexical Control</th>
<th>Structural Control</th>
<th>Sociolinguistic Competence</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Texts produced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Can tailor language to fit the audience; persuade; negotiate; advocate a position at length; interpret informally</td>
<td>Precise for representational purposes within personal and professional experiences. Can elaborate concepts freely; convey nuances of meaning</td>
<td>Organizes discourse well, using appropriate rhetorical devices and high Level discourse structures</td>
<td>Uses and understands details and ramifications of target cultural references. Can set and shift the tone of exchanges with a variety of native speakers</td>
<td>Speaks effortlessly and smoothly, but would seldom be perceived as a native speaker</td>
<td>Speeches, lectures, debates, conference discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker.</td>
<td>Breath of vocabulary and idiom equivalent to that of a highly articulate well-educated native speaker.</td>
<td>Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate well-educated native speaker.</td>
<td>Speech reflects the cultural standards of country where language is natively spoken.</td>
<td>Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate well-educated native speaker</td>
<td>All texts controlled by a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Assessment Criteria Are Used?

- Functions/Global Tasks
- Situational Contexts and Specific Content Areas
- Accuracy/Comprehensibility
- Text Type
- Delivery (ILR)
- Sociolinguistic Competence (ILR)
ACTFL & ILR OPI Similarities

- Interviews are interactive and adaptive
- Interviews are tape recorded
- Testers are trained and certified
- Language sample is rated holistically

Assessment Criteria
- Functions/Tasks
- Content/Context
- Text Type
- Accuracy

- Sustained performance of all criteria
- Disagreements in ratings are arbitrated
Differences in the Scales

**ACTFL**
- 4 Major levels
- 10 sublevels
  - High, Mid, Low
  - “High” sublevel is “fallen angel” from level above

**ILR/DLI**
- 6 Base levels (0-5)
- Each level has a “Plus”
- “Plus” can be a “rising star” or a “fallen angel”
**ACTFL and ILR/DLI OPI Testing**

**Differences in Structure and Elicitation**

**ACTFL**
- 4 required phases
- Iterative process of level checks and probes
  - Mid sublevel will contain equal number of level checks and probes
  - High sublevel will contain more probes
  - Low sublevel will contain more level checks

**ILR/DLI**
- Prescribed number of tasks for each level
- In order to assign a base rating, interview must contain at least 2 probes
- In order to assign a plus rating, interview must contain at least 4 probes
- Some interviews may required more than 1 role-play
# ACTFL and ILR/DLI OPI Testing

## Differences in Testing/Rating Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTFL</th>
<th>ILR/DLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test is conducted by 1 tester</td>
<td>Test is conducted by two testers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating assigned after review of tape</td>
<td>Testers assign rating immediately upon completion of interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind double rated by a second tester</td>
<td>Ratings must agree within the major level only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratings must agree exactly (level and sublevel)</td>
<td>If ratings are not the same, the base rating is assigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the Rating Scale?

- Hierarchy of global tasks
- Four major levels (ACTFL) / Five base levels (ILR)
- Sublevels (ACTFL) / Plus levels (ILR)
### Table 1: Relationship of the ACTFL Scale to the ILR Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTFL Scale</th>
<th>ILR Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced High</td>
<td>Native or Bilingual Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Mid</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Low</td>
<td>Distinguished Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate High</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Mid</td>
<td>Professional Working Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Low</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice High</td>
<td>Limited Working Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Mid</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novice Low</td>
<td>Survival Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Practical Proficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPI Practices: ACTFL

Structure of the OPI
There are FOUR mandatory phases

- Warm up
- Level Checks
- Probes
- Wind down
Structure of the OPI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm Up</th>
<th>Iterative/interweaving Process</th>
<th>Wind Down</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level checks</td>
<td>Probes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPI Practices: ACTFL

- **Novice**: 단어, 구절로 이루어진 암기 수준의 대화
  - Yes/no question: 형제가 있어요?
  - Choices/Tag questions: 대학생이에요? 대학원생이에요?
  - Fact/Information: 이번 학기에 무슨 수업을 들어요?
Intermediate: 간단한 일상 대화, 문장 단위

- Open-ended
  공부 맏고 시간이 날때 뭐 하세요?.
  왜 수영을 좋아하세요?

- Polite request
  한국 여행에 대해 좀 더 이야기해 주세요.
  그리고요?
Advanced: 이야기/설명, 비교, 묘사

- Narration
  고등학교때 가장 기억에 남는 일을 이야기해 주세요.

- Comparison
  뉴욕하고 샌프란시스코하고 어떻게 달라요?

- Description
  푸즈볼은 어떻게 하는 거예요?
Superior: 의견, 가설, 주장

Prelude

교회에서 어릴때부터 여러가지 재미있는 활동에 참여했군요. XX 씨는 교회에 다니는 사람들이 주위 사람들에게 전도하는 것을 본 적이 있어요? 그리고 전도를 해 보신 적이 있어요?

Challenge the opinion

일각에서는 강요된 전도에 대해서 부정적인 시각도 있는데 이에 대해서는 어떻게 생각하세요? 그리고 부정적인 시각을 가진 사람을 전도를 해야할 입장이라면 어떠한 방식으로 전도하시겠어요?
만약에 나중에 결혼하고 나서 아이를 가지게 되었는데 그 아이가 주일에 교회에 가기 싫다고 한다면 어떻게 하시겠어요?
How are the Sublevels Defined?

LOW

The LOW Sublevel:
(Threshold performance)

- Sustained but skeletal for the level
- “just hanging on”
How are the Sublevels Defined?

MID

The MID Sublevel:

- quantity and quality for the level
- some features of the next level
How are the Sublevels Defined?

**HIGH/PLUS**

The HIGH Sublevel:
(Threshold performance)

- functions most of the time at the next higher level
- “fall” from above
OPI Practices: ILR

Level 1 Tasks

- Simple Short Conversation
- Examinee Asks Questions
- Role-play: Basic Survival Situation
OPI Practices: ILR

Level 2 Tasks

- Narrate in Present (time)
- Narrate in Past (time)
- Narrate in Future (time)
- Physical Description (person, place, object)
- Instructions or Directions
- Report Facts about Current Events
- Role-play: Survival Situation with a Complication
OPI Practices: ILR

Level 3 Tasks

- Support Opinion
- Hypothesize
- Discuss an Abstract Topic
- Role-play: Unfamiliar Situation
Samples of Tasks

Level 1
Role-Play: Basic Survival Situation

You are at a clothing store in Seoul, Korea, where you will be staying for some time. You need to buy some clothes for colder weather since the winter season is about to start. The tester will play the role of the store clerk. Talk with him/her and arrange to buy what you need.
OPI Practices: ILR

Samples of Tasks

Instruction

스키 타는 것을 참 좋아한다고 그랬죠? 저는 스키를 한 번도 안 타 봤어요. 그런데 한 번 배워 보고 싶거든요. 어떻게 하면 스키를 배울 수 있는지 스키 타는 방법을 좀 알려 주세요.

스키를 타려고 하면 먼저 장비가 필요합니다 …
Support Opinion

한국에서 요즘 영어 교육이 굉장히 중요하다고 말하고 있다고요. 예전에는 중학교나 고등학교 들어가서부터 영어를 배우기 시작했는데, 최근에는 초등학교에서부터 영어 배우는 것을 의무화하고 있어서요. 그래도 젊은 주부들 사이에서는 지금 현재 아이들을 낳을 때 미국에까지 와서 낳으면서 아이들이 어렸을 때부터 영어를 배울 수 있게 하고 있어요. 반대로 한편에서는 한국말도 모르는 상태에서 영어를 배우는 것이 효과적이지 않다고 하고 있어요. 민 대위님 생각에는 두 의견 중에 어떤 의견을 지지하시는지 왜 그런지 저희들에게 말씀해 주시겠어요?

제 생각에는 외국어를 배우는 것이 아주 좋은 것입니다. 특히 아주 일찍 시작하면 좋겠습니다...
Participants hand-on

Find at least two different level texts in each group.

Be prepared to justify your levels.
Direct Applications

- To assess outcomes at the end of a program of study
- To help teachers and administrators assess their programs
- To measure progress following a significant linguistic experience
- For threshold testing
  - Certification and qualification
Indirect Applications

- How to set realistic expectations
- How to structure classes
- How to teach the elements of language, particularly grammar
- How to test speaking in the classroom context
  - Prochievement testing
Instructional Applications

The OPI as a model for classroom instruction

- Teacher’s role
- Teacher behaviors
- Phases of the interview and the class period
- Assessment criteria
  - Not just content and accuracy
  - Focus on what students CAN DO with the language
    - Focus on function
Implications for Classroom Instruction

Changing the Focus

- From assumed knowledge to observable performance
- The ACTFL Guidelines as a stepladder for learning
- Skill development
- Focus on real life
- Realistic expectations
- Degrees of control
Questions & Comments

Thank you!