



DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTER
LACKLAND AIR FORCE BASE, TX 78236-5259

October 13, 2011
DLIELC 1025.9
LEAT

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY.

DLIELC INSTRUCTION 1025.9

SUBJECT: Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Program Guidelines

- References:
- (a) DLIELC Instruction 1025.9, Management of the DLIELC Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Program, May 15, 2009 (hereby superseded).
 - (b) AFJI 16-103, Managing the Defense English Language Program, August 31, 1994.
 - (c) AFI 16-105, Joint Security Assistance Training Regulation, January 3, 2011.

1. PURPOSE

Under the authority of references (b) and (c), this instruction prescribes policies and procedures governing scheduling, administration, scoring and release of scores for the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) nonresident Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) program. The OPI tests interactive listening comprehension and speaking ability by means of an interview conducted by two certified OPI raters/testers. During the course of the interview, students will be asked to talk about various topics, ask and answer questions, verbally handle situations, etc. Ratings are based on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) skill level descriptions (Encl E1).

2. APPLICABILITY

This instruction applies to all Security Cooperation Offices (SCOs) and Continental United States (CONUS) Test Control Officers (TCOs) of all services or agencies responsible for the selection of International Military Students (IMS) to attend International Military Education and Training, Foreign Military Sales or other security assistance training. It also applies to services or agencies using the OPI test for the selection,

placement or reclassification of US military personnel or for determination of their English language competency for certain courses or jobs. Additionally, US Air Force exercise planners may use the test to determine the eligibility of international participants in flying exercises.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. After-hours OPIs. OPIs conducted either before or after the normal duty hours of OPI raters.

3.2. Authorized In-Country (IC)/CONUS Representatives. SCOs or US personnel with SCO responsibilities, English Comprehension Level (ECL) TCOs and Alternate Test Control Officers (ATCOs) or US Government personnel (e.g., Reserve Officer Training Corps [ROTC] or Military Entrance Processing Stations [MEPS] guidance counselors) designated to coordinate and monitor nonresident OPIs

3.3. C/S. The format for reporting OPI Listening Comprehension (C), and Speaking (S) scores based on the ILR level descriptions (Encl E1). Example score: C/S of 2+/2.

3.4 ILR Language Skill Level Descriptions (Encl E1.) The 11-point (including plus points) scale describing comprehension and speaking proficiencies against which a candidate's OPI linguistic performance is evaluated.

3.5 Language Training Detachment (LTD). A person or group of personnel from DLIELC performing duty off the resident campus in the US or a foreign country, usually on a military installation, as consultant(s) or instructor(s) in English as a foreign/second language.

3.6 Nonresident OPI. An OPI conducted in person by a mobile training team (MTT) or over the telephone for an individual who is not physically on the DLIELC campus.

3.7. OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview). A test of a candidate's interactive listening comprehension and speaking (C/S) ability, conducted under controlled conditions by at least two certified OPI raters.

3.8. OPI Coordinator. The Language Testing Specialist appointed by the Chief, Test and Measurement Branch (LEAT) responsible for the day-to-day management of the DLIELC OPI program.

3.9. OPI Rater. A resident DLIELC GS-1701 staff member who has been trained and certified to conduct OPIs and assign ILR-based language skill ratings (Encl E1).

3.10. OPI Rater Trainer. An OPI rater who has been trained and certified to conduct OPI training certification for raters and verifiers, perform quality assurance performance checks, verify C/S ratings and perform recertification observations for raters.

3.11. OPI Rating. The ILR-based C/S rating adjudged to best describe a candidate's linguistic performance during an OPI. OPIs at DLIELC have a ceiling of 4/4.

3.12. OPI Rating Verification. The review of a recorded OPI by an OPI verifier and/or rater trainer to ensure rating validity and rater reliability.

3.13. OPI Verifier. An OPI rater who has been trained to verify C/S ratings of recorded OPIs.

3.14. Resident OPI. An OPI conducted in person or over the telephone for an individual who is physically on the DLIELC campus.

3.15. Telephonic OPI. An OPI conducted over a telephone.

4. POLICY

4.1. All nonresident OPI interviews must be proctored by a US government employee, GS-5, E-5 or above.

4.2 OPI interviews are conducted and verified by DLIELC OPI-certified personnel only. Ratings are assigned by applying the same ILR-based standards (Encl E1) to resident, nonresident, face-to-face and telephonic interviews alike.

4.3. Candidates must attain their required ECL score before they can be scheduled for an OPI.

4.4. All nonresident and resident interviews for IMSS scheduled for aviation follow-on training (FOT), excluding loadmasters, are conducted telephonically.

4.5. All OPIs will normally be digitally recorded.

4.6. OPI verifications:

4.6.1. The following nonresident interviews will not normally be verified: prerequisite Instructor Development (ID) scores, DLIELC-approved LTD immersion program scores that meet or exceed qualification requirements, other nonresident scores exceeding qualification requirements by a plus point (or more) in either C or S.

4.6.2. Other nonresident scores that fall below or only just meet qualification requirements will be verified.

4.6.3. A qualifying OPI rating is valid for six months.

4.6.4. OCONUS candidates who have taken a telephonic OPI must wait 90 days before being re-interviewed unless a waiver is granted by DLIELC/LEAT. Waivers will normally not be granted before a 30-day wait-period has elapsed. During this waiting period the candidate should be enrolled in an English program that stresses oral language acquisition.

4.6.5. DLIELC-approved LTD immersion program candidates must wait 30 days before being re-interviewed.

4.7 Raters' notes on DLIELC Form 1025.9(A), OPI Performance Profile, may be released only to supervisors/managers of resident and DLIELC-approved LTD immersion programs.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. LEAT will:

5.1.1. Exercise overall management of the OPI program, coordinate all OPI policy changes and serve as the office of record for all official OPIs.

5.1.2. The Chief, LEAT, may approve waivers to DLIELC required OPI limitations.

5.1.3. Ensure that quality assurance measures are performed through documentation/recording review, trend data analysis and statistical analysis and take (or recommend, as appropriate) actions necessary to maintain and improve program quality.

5.1.4 The Chief, LEAT, will appoint a Language Testing Specialist (LTS) as OPI Coordinator to manage the day-to-day operation of the DLIELC OPI program.

5.2. The OPI Coordinator will:

5.2.1. Coordinate the scheduling of nonresident telephonic OPIs with appropriate IC/CONUS representatives.

5.2.2. Maintain a calendar of nonresident telephonic OPIs, identified by a unique alphanumeric code

5.2.3. Arrange for the formation of OPI teams to conduct all OPIs, including after-hours OPIs.

5.2.4. Promptly refer OPIs for verification as needed and ensure that they are accomplished as required.

5.2.5. Normally inform IC/CONUS representatives of test results within two business days.

5.2.6. Ensure all information on resident and nonresident OPIs, including those conducted by MTTs, is entered into the OPI database.

5.3. OPI raters will:

5.3.1. Accomplish OPIs and OPI training as assigned.

5.3.2. Conduct OPIs using prescribed techniques, guidelines and procedures to elicit a ratable speech sample from the candidate and independently rate it.

5.3.3. Promptly complete all the OPI Performance Profile (Encl E2) and any other required interview documentation.

5.4 OPI verifiers and rater trainers will verify recorded interviews referred to them by the OPI Coordinator and document their findings.

5.5. Authorized IC/CONUS representatives will:

5.5.1. Identify ECL-qualified personnel who have an OPI requirement, initiate and maintain a log entry for each candidate and schedule OPIs through LEAT.

5.5.2. Immediately notify the DLIELC OPI Coordinator of any cancellations or changes in scheduled OPI appointments.

5.5.3. Attend the interview, observing the required test protocol included in the appointment confirmation, and maintain test security at all times.

5.5.4. Inform the host country or appropriate CONUS personnel of the interviewee's OPI rating.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1. Scheduling Nonresident OPIs.

6.1.1. The IC/CONUS requesting official will:

6.1.1.1. Confirm that the candidate's proposed training has an OPI requirement and that the candidate has already met the ECL requirement. ECL-exempt countries will provide a qualifying American Language Course Placement Test score.

6.1.1.2. Begin an entry for the candidate in the OPI log book to include candidate's name, rank, date of OPI and rating.

6.1.1.3. Make every effort to schedule OPIs at least one week in advance of the target interview date, (for CONUS, schedule **at least** two days in advance) and schedule no more than two OPIs from the same organization on the same day.

6.1.1.4. Completely fill out an online OPI request at http://dlielc.edu/Testing/opi_ReqFm.html (Encl E3) and send it as an email attachment to OPI@us.af.mil. Include the following required information: the desired date and time of the OPI, the sponsor service, the interviewee's first and last names, the qualifying ECL score and date of that score (as well as the target-language OPI score for the US Army Translator Aide program (MOS 09L), the worksheet control number or military ID number, the candidate's rank/pay grade, the case number (if available), the Military Articles and Services List FOT number related to the OPI and the interviewee's previous OPI data (if any).

6.1.2. The OPI Coordinator will:

6.1.2.1. Maintain the nonresident OPI calendar, monitor the scheduled nonresident OPIs and the OPI teams on duty

and inform the OPI raters of last-minute changes and cancellations.

6.1.2.2. Coordinate the scheduling of requested OPIs with IC/CONUS representatives, emailing them a confirmation of the interview date and time along with the protocol to be followed on the day of the test. Whenever possible, schedule interviews during the normal DLIELC workday: nonresident overseas telephonic interviews within seven working days of the receipt of the request and CONUS interviews within two working days.

6.1.2.3 Assign each nonresident OPI a unique alphanumeric code to represent the specific candidate and interview conducted on that date. The code will consist of the country code, the service, the year, the Julian calendar date and the sequence number, i.e., THP0912203.

6.1.2.4. Enter all required information on the nonresident OPI calendar and inform the IC/CONUS representative of the scheduled interview date and time and test protocol via e-mail. The protocol states that the proctor will positively identify the interviewee, provide a quiet room with only one telephone (not a speakerphone), remain in the room throughout the interview, and, when requested by the interviewers, provide paper and pencil for one portion only of the interview.

6.2. Testing Procedures

6.2.1. The IC/CONUS representative will:

6.2.1.1. Ensure that the interviewee arrives at the scheduled time and place for the telephonic OPI and confirm proper identity through official photo identification.

6.2.1.2. Provide a room free of noise and distractions, with a chair, table/desk.

6.2.1.3. Call DLIELC at COMM: (210) 671-0641 or DSN: (312) 473-0641 using a normal phone line (not a speaker phone or cell phone).

6.2.1.3.1. Each party will be prepared to wait 20 minutes after the appointed time, if necessary.

6.2.1.3.2. If for any reason the line is disconnected and the initiating party is unable to reestablish contact within twenty minutes, the telephonic OPI will be canceled and rescheduled.

6.2.1.4. Remain in the testing room (off to side) during session to preclude test compromise and not allow anyone else to enter the room.

6.2.1.5. Not allow candidate to read or write anything except during the information gathering task (IGT) when prompted by the interviewers to provide the candidate paper and a pencil.

6.2.1.6. Not discuss OPI questions or responses with the candidate during or after test, and appropriately isolate scheduled interviewees to preclude their discussing any aspect of the OPI.

6.2.1.7. Indicate on the OPI log any interruption of an interview prior to its completion.

6.2.2. The OPI raters will:

6.2.2.1. Contact the OPI Coordinator if the call from IC/CONUS proctor is not received within 5 minutes and wait 15 more minutes for an incoming call.

6.2.2.2. Confirm the identity of the interviewee with the authorized IC/CONUS representative by first and last name and by worksheet control number, military identification number or last four digits of their social security number, before the telephonic OPI begins.

6.2.2.3. Determine, based on their initial verbal exchange with the IC/CONUS representative, whether or not the voice transmission is of sufficient quality to begin the telephonic OPI, and call back if there is a bad connection. No more than two call-backs are allowed on a given date.

6.2.2.4. Ensure the audio recorder is in operation before beginning the OPI.

6.2.2.5. Annotate on DLIELC Form 1025.9(A)(Encl E2) (paper or electronic versions) any interruption in an interview prior to its completion.

6.2.2.6. Independently rate candidates IAW Encl E1, compare independent ratings and resolve any differences through discussion and/or negotiation.

6.2.2.7. Complete the required information on DLIELC Form 1025.9(A) (paper or electronic version) and provide rating justification (Encl E2).

6.2.3. The OPI Coordinator will attempt to contact IC/CONUS representative if the call to DLIELC is not received within five minutes of the appointment time, and cancel the OPI session if the call is more than 20 minutes late.

6.3. Verification and Release of Scores

6.3.1. The OPI Coordinator will:

6.3.1.1. Refer interviews requiring verification to a certified DLIELC OPI verifier and/or rater trainer and ensure that verification is accomplished.

6.3.1.2. Whenever possible, email IC/CONUS representatives OPI score within two US business days of the interview.

6.3.2. The IC/CONUS Representative will:

6.3.2.1. Inform the appropriate IC/CONUS test score user of the OPI results as soon as possible after receiving DLIELC notification of the rating.

6.3.2.2. Complete the candidate's OPI log book entry with OPI completion date and score.

6.3.2.3. IC representatives will add the OPI rating and date of interview on the invitational travel order (ITO) and Security Assistance Network (SAN) Web.

6.4. In the event the OPI raters cannot agree on the rating, the recording will be reviewed and rated by a rater trainer. If the sample is deemed un-ratable by the rater trainer, the candidate will be re-interviewed by another panel of raters. The rater trainer will be the final arbiter of the score.

7. SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

The subject of this instruction is changed from "Management of the DLIELC Oral Proficiency (OPI) Program," to "Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Program Guidelines." DLIELC internal policies and procedures relating to selection, training and certification of OPI raters, verifiers and rater trainers are now the responsibilities of the Professional Development Branch (LEAD) in coordination with LEAT. Policies and Procedures pertaining to management of the DLIELC OPI program on the resident campus will be contained in a forthcoming, new instruction.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE

This instruction is effective immediately.

HOWARD G. JONES III, Col, USAF
Commandant

3 Enclosures

1. Interagency Language Roundtable Language Skill Level Descriptions (Speaking and Listening)
2. DLIELC Form 1025.9(A), OPI Performance Profile
3. Online OPI Request Form

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

INTERAGENCY LANGUAGE ROUNDTABLE LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

SPEAKING

Preface

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize spoken language use. Each of the six "base levels" (coded 00, 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50) implies control of any previous "base level's" functions and accuracy. The "plus level" designation (coded 06, 16, 26, etc.) will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one base skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next "base level." The "plus level" descriptions are therefore supplementary to the "base level" descriptions.

A skill level is assigned to a person through an authorized language examination. Examiners assign a level on a variety of performance criteria exemplified in the descriptive statements. Therefore, the examples given here illustrate, but do not exhaustively describe, either the skills a person may possess or situations in which he/she may function effectively.

Statements describing accuracy refer to typical stages in the development of competence in the most commonly taught languages in formal training programs. In other languages, emerging competence parallels these characterizations, but often with different details.

Unless otherwise specified, the term "native speaker" refers to native speakers of a standard dialect.

"Well-educated," in the context of these proficiency descriptions, does not necessarily imply formal higher education. However, in cultures where formal higher education is common, the language-use abilities of persons who have had such education is considered the standard. That is, such a person meets contemporary expectations for the formal, careful style of the language, as well as a range of less formal varieties of the language.

Speaking 0 (No Proficiency)

Unable to function in the spoken language. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words. Has essentially no communicative ability. (Has been coded S-0 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 00]

Speaking 0+ (Memorized Proficiency)

Able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances. Shows little real autonomy

of expression, flexibility, or spontaneity. Can ask questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy only with memorized utterances or formulae. Attempts at creating speech are usually unsuccessful.

Examples: The individual's vocabulary is usually limited to areas of immediate survival needs. Most utterances are telegraphic; that is, functors (linking words, markers, and the like) are omitted, confused, or distorted. An individual can usually differentiate most significant sounds when produced in isolation, but, when combined in words or groups of words, errors may be frequent. Even with repetition, communication is severely limited even with people used to dealing with foreigners. Stress, intonation, tone, etc. are usually quite faulty. (Has been coded S-0+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 06]

Speaking 1 (Elementary Proficiency)

Able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics. A native speaker must often use slowed speech, repetition, paraphrase, or a combination of these to be understood by this individual. Similarly, the native speaker must strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand even simple statements/questions from this individual. This speaker has a functional, but limited proficiency. Misunderstandings are frequent, but the individual is able to ask for help and to verify comprehension of native speech in face-to-face interaction. The individual is unable to produce continuous discourse except with rehearsed material.

Examples: Structural accuracy is likely to be random or severely limited. Time concepts are vague. Vocabulary is inaccurate, and its range is very narrow. The individual often speaks with great difficulty. By repeating, such speakers can make themselves understood to native speakers who are in regular contact with foreigners but there is little precision in the information conveyed. Needs, experience, or training may vary greatly from individual to individual; for example, speakers at this level may have encountered quite different vocabulary areas. However, the individual can typically satisfy predictable, simple, personal and accommodation needs; can generally meet courtesy, introduction, and identification requirements; exchange greetings; elicit and

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

provide, for example, predictable and skeletal biographical information. He/she might give information about business hours, explain routine procedures in a limited way, and state in a simple manner what actions will be taken. He/she is able to formulate some questions even in languages with complicated question constructions. Almost every utterance may be characterized by structural errors and errors in basic grammatical relations. Vocabulary is extremely limited and characteristically does not include modifiers. Pronunciation, stress, and intonation are generally poor, often heavily influenced by another language. Use of structure and vocabulary is highly imprecise. (Has been coded S-1 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 10]

Speaking 1+ (Elementary Proficiency, Plus)

Can initiate and maintain predictable face-to-face conversations and satisfy limited social demands. He/she may, however, have little understanding of the social conventions of conversation. The interlocutor is generally required to strain and employ real-world knowledge to understand even some simple speech. The speaker at this level may hesitate and may have to change subjects due to lack of language resources. Range and control of the language are limited. Speech largely consists of a series of short, discrete utterances.

Examples: The individual is able to satisfy most travel and accommodation needs and a limited range of social demands beyond exchange of skeletal biographic information. Speaking ability may extend beyond immediate survival needs. Accuracy in basic grammatical relations is evident, although not consistent. May exhibit the more common forms of verb tenses, for example, but may make frequent errors in formation and selection. While some structures are established, errors occur in more complex patterns. The individual typically cannot sustain coherent structures in longer utterances or unfamiliar situations. Ability to describe and give precise information is limited. Person, space, and time references are often used incorrectly. Pronunciation is understandable to natives used to dealing with foreigners. Can combine most significant sounds with reasonable comprehensibility, but has difficulty in producing certain sounds in certain positions or in certain combinations. Speech will usually be labored. Frequently has to repeat utterances to be understood by the general public. (Has been coded S-1+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 16]

Speaking 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle routine work-related interactions that are limited in scope. In more complex and sophisticated work-related tasks, language usage generally disturbs the native speaker. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most normal, high-frequency social conversational situations including extensive, but casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information. The individual can get the gist of most everyday conversations but has some difficulty understanding native speakers in situations that require specialized or sophisticated knowledge. The individual's utterances are minimally cohesive. Linguistic structure is usually not very elaborate and not thoroughly controlled; errors are frequent. Vocabulary use is appropriate for high-frequency utterances, but unusual or imprecise elsewhere.

Examples: While these interactions will vary widely from individual to individual, the individual can typically ask and answer predictable questions in the workplace and give straightforward instructions to subordinates. Additionally, the individual can participate in personal and accommodation-type interactions with elaboration and facility; that is, can give and understand complicated, detailed, and extensive directions and make non-routine changes in travel and accommodation arrangements. Simple structures and basic grammatical relations are typically controlled; however, there are areas of weakness. In the commonly taught languages, these may be simple markings such as plurals, articles, linking words, and negatives or more complex structures such as tense/aspect usage, case morphology, passive constructions, word order, and embedding. (Has been coded S-2 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 20]

Speaking 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective. The individual shows considerable ability to communicate effectively on topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows a high degree of fluency and ease of speech, yet when under tension or pressure, the ability to use the language effectively may deteriorate. Comprehension of normal native speech is typically nearly complete. The individual may miss cultural and local references and may require a native speaker to adjust to his/her limitations in some ways. Native

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

speakers often perceive the individual's speech to contain awkward or inaccurate phrasing of ideas, mistaken time, space, and person references, or to be in some way inappropriate, if not strictly incorrect.

Examples: Typically the individual can participate in most social, formal, and informal interactions; but limitations either in range of contexts, types of tasks, or level of accuracy hinder effectiveness. The individual may be ill at ease with the use of the language either in social interaction or in speaking at length in professional contexts. He/she is generally strong in either structural precision or vocabulary, but not in both. Weakness or unevenness in one of the foregoing, or in pronunciation, occasionally results in miscommunication. Normally controls, but cannot always easily produce general vocabulary. Discourse is often incohesive. (Has been coded S-2+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 26]

Speaking 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Nevertheless, the individual's limitations generally restrict the professional contexts of language use to matters of shared knowledge and/or international convention. Discourse is cohesive. The individual uses the language acceptably, but with some noticeable imperfections; yet, errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The individual can effectively combine structure and vocabulary to convey his/her meaning accurately. The individual speaks readily and fills pauses suitably. In face-to-face conversation with natives speaking the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Although cultural references, proverbs, and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Individual sounds are accurate; but stress, intonation, and pitch control may be faulty.

Examples: Can typically discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can use the language as part of normal professional duties such as answering objections, clarifying points, justifying decisions, understanding the essence of challenges, stating and defending policy, conducting meetings, delivering briefings, or other extended and elaborate informative monologues. Can reliably elicit

information and informed opinion from native speakers. Structural inaccuracy is rarely the major cause of misunderstanding. Use of structural devices is flexible and elaborate. Without searching for words or phrases, the individual uses the language clearly and relatively naturally to elaborate concepts freely and make ideas easily understandable to native speakers. Errors occur in low-frequency and highly complex structures. (Has been coded S-3 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 30]

Speaking 3+ (General Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Is often able to use the language to satisfy professional needs in a wide range of sophisticated and demanding tasks.

Examples: Despite obvious strengths, may exhibit some hesitancy, uncertainty, effort, or errors which limit the range of language-use tasks that can be reliably performed. Typically there is particular strength in fluency and one or more, but not all, of the following: breadth of lexicon, including low- and medium-frequency items, especially socio-linguistic/cultural references and nuances of close synonyms; structural precision, with sophisticated features that are readily, accurately, and appropriately controlled (such as complex modification and embedding in Indo-European languages); discourse competence in a wide range of contexts and tasks, often matching a native speaker's strategic and organizational abilities and expectations. Occasional patterned errors occur in low frequency and highly-complex structures. (Has been coded S-3+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 36]

Speaking 4 (Advanced Professional Proficiency)

Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. The individual's language usage and ability to function are fully successful. Organizes discourse well, using appropriate rhetorical speech devices, native cultural references, and understanding. Language ability only rarely hinders him/her in performing any task requiring language; yet, the individual would seldom be perceived as a native. Speaks effortlessly and smoothly and is able to use the language with a high degree of effectiveness, reliability, and precision for all representational purposes within the range of personal and professional experience and scope of responsibilities. Can serve as an informal interpreter in a range of unpredictable circumstances. Can perform extensive,

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

sophisticated language tasks, encompassing most matters of interest to well-educated native speakers, including tasks which do not bear directly on a professional specialty.

Examples: Can discuss in detail concepts which are fundamentally different from those of the target culture and make those concepts clear and accessible to the native speaker. Similarly the individual can understand the details and ramifications of concepts that are culturally or conceptually different from his/her own. Can set the tone of interpersonal official, semi-official, and non-professional verbal exchanges with a representative range of native speakers (in a range of varied audiences, purposes, tasks, and settings). Can play an effective role among native speakers in such contexts as conferences, lectures, and debates on matters of disagreement. Can advocate a position at length, both formally and in chance encounters, using sophisticated verbal strategies. Understands and reliably produces shifts of both subject matter and tone. Can understand native speakers of the standard and other major dialects in essentially any face-to-face interaction. (Has been coded S-4 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 40]

Speaking 4+ (Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Speaking proficiency is regularly superior in all respects, usually equivalent to that of a well-educated, highly articulate native speaker. Language ability does not impede the performance of any language-use task. However, the individual

would not necessarily be perceived as culturally native.

Examples: The individual organizes discourse well, employing functional rhetorical speech devices, native cultural references and understanding. Effectively applies a native speaker's social and circumstantial knowledge. However, cannot sustain that performance under all circumstances. While the individual has a wide range and control of structure, an occasional non-native slip may occur. The individual has a sophisticated control of vocabulary and phrasing that is rarely imprecise, yet there are occasional weaknesses in idioms, colloquialisms, pronunciation, cultural reference or there may be an occasional failure to interact in a totally native manner. (Has been coded S-4+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 46]

Speaking 5 (Functionally Native Proficiency)

Speaking proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of a highly articulate well-educated native speaker and reflects the cultural standards of the country where the language is natively spoken. The individual uses the language with complete flexibility and intuition, so that speech on all levels is fully accepted by well-educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references. Pronunciation is typically consistent with that of well-educated native speakers of a non-stigmatized dialect. (Has been coded S-5 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 50]

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

INTERAGENCY LANGUAGE ROUNDTABLE LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

LISTENING

Preface

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize comprehension of the spoken language. Each of the six "base levels" (coded 00, 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50) implies control of any previous "base level's" functions and accuracy. The "plus level" designation (coded 06, 16, 26, etc.) will be assigned when proficiency substantially exceeds one base skill level and does not fully meet the criteria for the next "base level." The "plus level" descriptions are therefore supplementary to the "base level" descriptions.

A skill level is assigned to a person through an authorized language examination. Examiners assign a level on a variety of performance criteria exemplified in the descriptive statements. Therefore, the examples given here illustrate, but do not exhaustively describe, either the skills a person may possess or situations in which he/she may function effectively.

Statements describing accuracy refer to typical stages in the development of competence in the most commonly taught languages in formal training programs. In other languages, emerging competence parallels these characterizations, but often with different details.

Unless otherwise specified, the term "native listener" refers to native speakers and listeners of a standard dialect.

"Well-educated" in the context of these proficiency descriptions, does not necessarily imply formal higher education. However, in cultures where formal higher education is common, the language-use abilities of persons who have had such education is considered the standard. That is, such a person meets contemporary expectations for the formal, careful style of the language, as well as a range of less formal varieties of the language.

Listening 0 (No Proficiency)

No practical understanding of the spoken language. Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words with essentially no ability to comprehend communication. (Has been coded L-0

in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 00]

Listening 0+ (Memorized Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs. Slight increase in utterance length understood but requires frequent long pauses between understood phrases and repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition. Understands with reasonable accuracy only when this involves short memorized utterances or formulae. Utterances understood are relatively short in length. Misunderstandings arise due to ignoring or inaccurately hearing sounds or word endings (both inflectional and noninflectional) distorting the original meaning. Can understand only with difficulty even such people as teachers who are used to speaking with non-native speakers. Can understand best those statements where context strongly supports the utterance's meaning. Gets some main ideas. (Has been coded L-0+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 06]

Listening 1 (Elementary Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand utterances about basic survival needs and minimum courtesy and travel requirements. In areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics, can understand simple questions and answers, simple statements and very simple face-to-face conversations in a standard dialect. These must often be delivered more clearly than normal at a rate slower than normal, with frequent repetitions or paraphrase (that is, by a native used to dealing with foreigners). Once learned, these sentences can be varied for similar level vocabulary and grammar and still be understood. In the majority of utterances, misunderstandings arise due to overlooked or misunderstood syntax and other grammatical clues. Comprehension vocabulary inadequate to understand anything but the most elementary needs. Strong interference from the candidate's native language occurs. Little precision in the information understood owing to the tentative state of passive grammar and lack of vocabulary. Comprehension areas include basic needs such as: meals, lodging, transportation, time and simple directions (including both route instructions and orders from customs officials, policemen, etc.) Understands main ideas. (Has been coded L-1 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 10]

Listening 1+ (Elementary Proficiency, Plus)

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Sufficient comprehension to understand short conversations about all survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility evident in understanding into a range of circumstances beyond immediate survival needs. Shows spontaneity in understanding by speed, although consistency of understanding uneven. Limited vocabulary range necessitates repetition for understanding. Understands more common time forms and most question forms, some word order patterns, but miscommunication still occurs with more complex patterns. Cannot sustain understanding of coherent structures in longer utterances or in unfamiliar situations. Understanding of descriptions and the giving of precise information is limited. Aware of basic cohesive features, e.g., pronouns, verb inflections, but many are unreliably understood, especially if less immediate in reference. Understanding is largely limited to a series of short, discrete utterances. Still has to ask for utterances to be repeated. Some ability to understand facts. (Has been coded L-1+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 16]

Listening 2 (Limited Working Proficiency)

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in a standard dialect, delivered at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners, about everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine office matters through descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; can follow essential points of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in his/her special professional field. Only understands occasional words and phrases of statements made in unfavorable conditions, for example through loudspeakers outdoors. Understands factual content. Native language causes less interference in listening comprehension. Able to understand facts, i.e., the lines but not between or beyond the lines. (Has been coded L-2 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 20]

Listening 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus)

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to

competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but under tension or pressure may break down. Candidate may display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. Normally understands general vocabulary with some hesitant understanding of everyday vocabulary still evident. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Some ability to understand implications. (Has been coded L-2+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 26]

Listening 3 (General Professional Proficiency)

Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field. Has effective understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in a standard dialect on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, news stories similar to wire service reports, oral reports, some oral technical reports and public addresses on non-technical subjects; can understand without difficulty all forms of standard speech concerning a special professional field. Does not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand implications. (Has been coded L-3 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 30]

E1. ENCLOSURE 1 (CONT.)

LANGUAGE SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS: SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Listening 3+ (General Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Comprehends most of the content and intent of a variety of forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs as well as general topics and social conversation. Ability to comprehend many sociolinguistic and cultural references. However, may miss some subtleties and nuances. Increased ability to comprehend unusually complex structures in lengthy utterances and to comprehend many distinctions in language tailored for different audiences. Increased ability to understand native speakers talking quickly, using nonstandard dialect or slang; however, comprehension not complete. Can discern some relationships among sophisticated listening materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow some unpredictable turns of thought readily in, for example, informal and formal speeches covering editorial, conjectural and literary material in subject matter areas directed to the general listener. (Has been coded L-3+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 36]

Listening 4 (Advanced Professional Proficiency)

Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs. Able to understand fully all speech with extensive and precise vocabulary, subtleties and nuances in all standard dialects on any subject relevant to professional needs within the range of his/her experience, including social conversations; all intelligible broadcasts and telephone calls; and many kinds of technical discussions and discourse. Understands language specifically tailored (including persuasion, representation, counseling, and negotiating) to different audiences. Able to understand the essentials of speech in some non-standard dialects. Has difficulty in understanding extreme dialect and

slang, also in understanding speech in unfavorable conditions, for example through bad loudspeakers outdoors. Can discern relationships among sophisticated listening materials in the context of broad experience. Can follow unpredictable turns of thought readily in, for example, informal and formal speeches covering editorial, conjectural, and literary material in any subject matter directed to the general listener. (Has been coded L-4 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 40]

Listening 4+ (Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus)

Increased ability to understand extremely difficult and abstract speech as well as ability to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs, including social conversations. Increased ability to comprehend native speakers using extreme nonstandard dialects and slang, as well as to understand speech in unfavorable conditions. Strong sensitivity to sociolinguistic and cultural references. Accuracy is close to that of the well-educated native listener but still not equivalent. (Has been coded L-4+ in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 46]

Listening 5 (Functionally Native Proficiency)

Comprehension equivalent to that of the well-educated native listener. Able to understand fully all forms and styles of speech intelligible to the well-educated native listener, including a number of regional and illiterate dialects, highly colloquial speech and conversations and discourse distorted by marked interference from other noise. Able to understand how natives think as they create discourse. Able to understand extremely difficult and abstract speech. (Has been coded L-5 in some nonautomated applications.) [Data Code 50]

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

DLIELC Form 1025.9(A) - OPI PERFORMANCE PROFILE

		
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DELIVERY	SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE	GLOBAL TASKS AND FUNCTIONS
DLIELC IMT1025.9(A), 20040701 (V2)		
PREVIOUS EDITION IS OBSOLETE		

E2. ENCLOSURE 2 (CONT.)

DLIELC Form 1025.9(A) - OPI PERFORMANCE PROFILE

		U.S. AIR FORCE		Close Save Print Email << Previous		
	Interactive Comprehension	Structural Control Texts Produced	Lexical Control	Delivery	Sociolinguistic Competence	Global Tasks and Functions
0+	The individual understands a number of short, memorized utterances in areas of immediate needs; frequent, long pauses and repeated requests for repetition.	No control. Can only use memorized structures. Individual words and phrases.	Memorized words and phrases related to immediate survival needs.	Even in memorized speech, stress, intonation, tone usually quite faulty.	Severely limited. Any knowledge of culture appropriateness has a nonlinguistic source.	Can make statements and ask questions using memorized material.
1	A native speaker must often use slowed speech, repetition, paraphrase or a combination of these to be understood by this individual. Misunderstandings are frequent, but the individual is able to ask for help and to verify comprehension of native speech in face-to-face interaction.	Structural accuracy is random or severely limited. Almost every utterance has errors in basic structures. Time concepts are vague. Can formulate some questions. Discrete sentences.	Very limited. Covers courtesy expressions, introductions, identification, personal and accommodation needs, daily routine.	Often speaks with great difficulty. Pronunciation, stress, intonation generally poor.	Uses greetings and courtesy expressions. Can interact with native speakers used to dealing with non-natives.	Can create sentences; begin, maintain and close short conversations by asking and answering simple questions; satisfy simple daily needs.
2	The individual can get the gist of most everyday conversations, but has some difficulty understanding native speakers in situations that require a specialized or sophisticated knowledge. (May require a native speaker to adjust to his/her limitations in some way.)	Discourse is minimally cohesive. Grammatical structures are usually not very elaborate and not thoroughly controlled; errors are frequent. Simple structure and basic grammatical relations are typically controlled. Full paragraphs.	Sufficient to discuss high frequency concrete topics such as work, family, personal background and interests, travel, current events. Imprecise for less common topics.	Speaks with confidence but not facility. Can usually be understood by those not used to dealing with non-natives.	Satisfies routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can interact with native speakers not used to dealing with non-natives; native speakers may have to adjust to limitations.	Can describe people, places and things; narrate current, past and future activities in full paragraphs; state facts; give instructions or directions; ask and answer questions in the work place; deal with non-routine daily situations.
3	In face-to-face conversation with natives speaking the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Although cultural references, proverbs and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation.	Effectively combines structure and vocabulary to convey meaning. Discourse is cohesive. Use of structural devices is flexible and elaborate. Errors occur in low frequency and highly complex structures; but structural inaccuracy rarely causes misunderstanding. Extended discourse.	Broad enough for effective formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Can convey abstract concepts.	Speaks readily and fills pauses suitably. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Flaws in stress, intonation, pitch rarely disturb the native speaker.	Uses cultural references. When errors are made, can easily repair the conversation.	Can converse extensively in formal and informal situations; discuss abstract topics; support opinions; hypothesize; deal with unfamiliar topics and situations; clarify points.
4	Can understand native speakers of the standard and other major dialects in essentially any face-to-face interaction. Can understand the details and ramifications of concepts that are culturally or conceptually different from his/her own. Understands shifts of both subject matter and tone.	Organizes discourse well, using appropriate rhetorical devices and high level discourse structures. Speeches, lectures, debates, conference discussions.	Precise for representational purposes within personal and professional experiences. Can elaborate concepts freely; choose appropriate words to convey nuances of meaning.	Speaks effortlessly and smoothly, but would seldom be perceived as a native speaker.	Uses and understands details and ramifications of target cultural references. Can set and shift the tone of exchanges with a variety of native speakers.	Can tailor language to fit the audience; counsel; persuade; represent an official point of view; negotiate; advocate a position at length; interpret informally.
5	(No gaps in comprehension, including all details and nuances.)	Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker. All texts controlled by a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker.	Breadth of vocabulary and idiom equivalent to that of a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker.	Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker of a standard dialect.	Speech reflects the cultural standards of country where language is natively spoken.	Functionally equivalent to a highly articulate, well-educated native speaker.

DLIELC (M11025-9(A), 20040701 (V2) (Reverse)

PREVIOUS EDITION IS OBSOLETE.

E3. ENCLOSURE 3

SAMPLE ONLINE OPI REQUEST

OPI Request

International Military Student Information

Name: _____ LAST _____ FIRST _____ MASL: _____

Rank: _____ Country: _____ MASL Requirements: ECL _____ OPI _____

Mil. ID: _____ WCN _____ Current/Latest ECL: Score _____ Date _____

Sponsor Service: Army Air Force Navy Previous OPI: Score _____ Date _____



US Student Information

Name: _____ LAST _____ FIRST _____ Current/Latest ECL: Score _____ Date _____

Rank: _____ SSN: xxx-xx- _____ Previous English OPI: Score _____ Date _____

Sponsor Service: Army Air Force Navy ROTC contracting/course level: _____

(09L ONLY) Target (native) language OPI score: _____ Language Requirements: ECL _____ OPI _____

Level of education in English: _____

Point of Contact/Test Administrator Information

POC Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Test Proctor name: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Location of Test

City: _____ State (US): _____ Country: _____

Requested Date/Time of OPI Interview

Interviews normally scheduled M-TH: 0730, 0900, 1030, 1300; F: 0730, 0900, 1030 San Antonio (US Central) time

Local Time

San Antonio Time

Day of Wk	Date	Time	Day of Wk	Date	Time
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Extenuating Circumstances / Notes: