

ACHIEVING ADVANCED LOW PROFICIENCY ON AN ACTFL OPI (SPANISH)

I. Reaching of Intermediate High on an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) indicates the following:

At the Intermediate level:

- x You fulfilled all of the requirements for the Intermediate level: creates with language by asking and answering questions about familiar topics, in sentences and strings of sentences.
- x Both the quantity and quality of your speech at the Intermediate level were consistently strong across all the assessment criteria.

At the Advanced level:

- x You demonstrated the ability to function at the Advanced level most of the time.
- x You were unable to sustain Advanced level performance across all the rating criteria all of the time.

*The Advanced level speaker can consistently narrate and describe in all major time frames, as well as handle a situation with a complication all in paragraph length or connected discourse across a variety of topics. Furthermore, the Advanced level speaker is a full partner in the conversation and is consistently understood by a native speaker who has no experience dealing with non-native speakers of the language in question.

II. Crossing the border from Intermediate High to Advanced Low:

For the Intermediate High speaker, crossing the threshold to Advanced Low requires focused and systematic practice at the Advanced level across a variety of content areas. Such practice should be structured in a way that results in your ability to:

- x Consistently maintain major time frames when narrating and describing integral paragraphs
- x Consistently maintain fluency, volume of language, variety of vocabulary in connected, oral paragraphs while narrating, describing, explaining, clarifying, elaborating, and stating.

III. Recommendations for reaching Advanced level proficiency

1. Work with a conversation partner or tutor who is familiar with the requirements of the Advanced level of speaking proficiency. Your conversation partner should provide opportunities for you to speak extemporaneously. Keep in mind that Advanced level speech is that which is produced by a full conversational partner. It is not rehearsed or prepared speech.
2. Practice the correct use of appropriate past tenses to maintain descriptions and narrations semantically and syntactically in past time. Practice reflexives in all tenses. Review and practice prepositional use, especially that which occurs in certain verbal expressions (i.e. conjugated verb preceding infinitive).
3. Keep a written journal in which you record interesting events, both personal and of a more general nature (e.g., current events in your community, city, country, etc.) Identify new vocabulary and phrases that are necessary to talk about these events. First write notes about the events, then practice telling them to a conversational partner while only referring to your notes.
4. Practice telling stories. Be sure to tell the whole story from beginning to end. Use words a