Investigating Classroom Teachers' Perceptions of Assessing U.S. College Students' L2 Chinese Oral Performance

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Abstract : This study examined Chinese teachers' perceptions of assessing U.S. college students' L2 (second language) Chinese oral performances at different levels. Ten oral performances were videotaped from which three were chosen as samples to represent three different proficiency levels based on professionals' judgments according to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. The three samples were shown to L2 Chinese teachers who completed questionnaires about their assessments for each speech sample. In total, 104 L2 Chinese teachers responded to each of the three samples. The Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) of the teachers' responses revealed three similar rating criteria patterns for assessing the three levels of oral performances. The teachers' responses to Samples 2 and 3 revealed five rating criteria: Global proficiency, Chinese conceptual framework, content richness, communication appropriateness, and communication clarity. The teachers' responses to Sample 1 revealed four rating criteria: global proficiency, Chinese conceptual framework, communication appropriateness/content richness, and communication clarity. However, the analyses of variance (ANOVAs) revealed that the proficiency levels of the three oral performances differed significantly across all rating criteria. Therefore, the data suggests that L2 classroom teachers could use the similar rating criteria pattern to assess college-level L2 Chinese students' oral performances at different proficiency levels.