FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCY TESTING
FOR HEALTHCARE INTERPRETERS

+MITI

The Medical Interpreter Test on the Internet (MITI) is a readiness and qualification test for interpreters in the medical field. It is designed to assess knowledge of interpreting ethics, modes and standards, medical vocabulary, listening and memorization skills, sight translation and speech production in both source and target languages. The MITI test is the country's only Internet-native professionally validated testing instrument that employs nationally recognized language testing analytics critical to verifying the core competencies necessary to be a successful healthcare interpreter.

Test Design:
The MITI test is designed to assess the linguistic and professional knowledge for the on-site healthcare interpreter. It is separated into 6 scored sections:

Part 1: Ethics and Standards of Interpreting: Multiple Choice questions that assess knowledge of interpreting standards, ethics, modes and practices as outlined in accepted national standards documents.

Part 2: Medical Vocabulary and Terminology: Matching questions that require the test taker to select the correct translation for vocabulary in health care and medical situations. These vocabulary items require translation from English to the target language and from the target language to English to assure the ability to control the language in both directions.

Part 3: Listening - Interpreting Accuracy: Multiple Choice questions that assess the ability to listen to an interpretation task and then select the best possible interpretation for that task from three possible choices. This assesses the ability to recognize nuance and specialized vocabulary in a rich context.

Part 4: Sentence Level Interpretation: Single Sentence interpretation tasks that focus on complex medical terminology or situations. The test takers interpretation is recorded and scored by trained live raters, using a standardized performance rubric across several critical criteria.

Part 5: Simulated Interpreting Sessions: Simulated interpreting sessions that place the test taker in the role of an interpreter in authentic interpreting sessions. Each session includes introductory exchanges, diagnosis/probing exchanges and treatment exchanges. The Simulated interpreting sessions were culled from actual patient/provider interactions and were cross checked and proofed by medical doctors who are native Spanish speakers.

Part 6: Sight Translation: This section requires the test taker to read a document (generally medication directions or other simple, non-legal documents) and sight translate it. The sight translation session is recorded and scored by trained live raters, using a standardized scoring rubric that focuses upon the elements of conducting efficient and accurate sight translation sessions.

Test Validation
The main benefits of the MITI test are derived from the scientific design and innovative use of technology that makes this an efficient, effective assessment of interpreter skills that is scientifically validated, reliable and affordable. It requires that test takers create task-based language that is scored by trained raters with a consistent rubric, thereby creating both an engaging and authentic assessment of interpreting skills that maintains high levels of consistency in scores across four clearly defined performance levels.

The MITI is administered over the internet so it can be delivered at anytime and at any location that meets minimum technology requirements, making the test easily and readily accessible to test takers when they are ready to test. Following are a few of the more critical benefits that the MITI test brings to the medical interpreting field.

Test Delivery
Tests can be delivered within 7 business days following the receipt of all testing fees and signed proctor agreements. Minimum user requirements are a supplied USB plug-in headset with built -in microphone, an Internet connection, a web browser (preferably Firefox or Internet Explorer), and Macromedia Flash and Java, which are both available as free online downloads. Since the system is platform-independent, it works equally well on a Mac or a PC. All test files are accessed through the web, so there is no need to install any applications or other data on the computer's hard drive. However, port 1935 must be open in order for communication to proceed smoothly with Avant's server.

Delivery of Test Results
Because MITI is delivered via the computer online, rapid scoring and reporting is facilitated by the use of cutting edge technology that allows for immediate machine

scoring of multiple choice and matching items, as well as, accelerated scoring of human-graded, speaking items. Test results can be delivered between 5-10 business days.

As trained raters are able to access the test taker samples quickly, the test delivery and reporting system facilitates consistent scoring with the use of clear scoring guides/rubrics. Automatic double scoring of 20% of the items ensures the maintenance of consistent, reliable scores for each test taker. Without this level of monitoring and rater management, test reliability and accuracy decrease.

The report page, which clearly lists performance indicators, outlines the skill and ability level for each test taker in each of the 6 critical areas described below, and includes an overall rating that indicates at which level a test taker has shown they are able to perform. The report page will offer organizations an insight to the areas of strength or limitations of each test taker. The results are also meaningful to the test taker because they allow him/her to identify the areas that he/she must improve upon in order to function well as an interpreter.

Psychometrics and Statistical Data: The MITI test has been piloted to over 250 individuals with actual healthcare interpreting experience, throughout the United States, across a wide spectrum of linguistic and interpreting skills and abilities. The results of the pilot have been processed and analyzed by statisticians and psychometricians to assure the reliability and accuracy of the test results and the basic design of the test. Rasch IRT (Item Response Theory) as well as Classical Item Analysis methods have been used to establish item difficulty and to build balanced test forms and establish meaningful cut scores for a range of interpreting abilities.

Inter-Rater Reliability: The MITI test also utilizes a built-in rater control system that assures consistent rating and scoring by our trained raters via a monitoring and tracking system that assures inter-rater reliability above 80%. All MITI raters are experienced interpreters who have a minimum of 5 years working experience in the medical interpreting field and who are trained to maintain the highest standards in scoring and evaluation of interpreter skills. As piloting was completed throughout the country, a team of expert independent psychometricians and statisticians have been employed to corroborate findings and establish the validity of the scoring rubrics.

Structure: The technology mediated delivery of the MITI test allows for testing with real world tasks that challenge the test taker in authentic interpreting situations. Each interpreting task is timed to more closely replicate the pace of an actual interpreting session and to create a more realistic healthcare interpreting environment. The multi-phase design of the test also allows for data collection in a number of different modes and areas to facilitate a more precise view of the strengths and limitations of each test taker, while at the same time allowing for a test that can be completed within 55-75 minutes. The computer-based delivery also allows for large numbers of concurrent test takers to log into the system and complete the test at the same time. Finally, the use of the computer to

deliver simulated interpreting sessions, which require the test taker to engage in real world interpreting tasks, is an efficient and cost effective approach to identifying professional ability to interpret at a variety of levels across a variety of topics/areas.

Cost: There are several cost saving elements inherent in the MITI test technology mediated delivery system. The MITI test does not require a live interlocutor for delivery. There is no need to have an individual standing by to administer the interview questions. The results of the test are maintained for indefinite lengths of time on the system servers, allowing human resource managers the ability to view and track scores in the system, including the ability to access actual audio samples of the test takers at any time for appeals purposes. All of this is done automatically via the MITI test engine technology and allows for efficient management of test taker data as well as delivery environments. This allows for significant cost savings in terms of managing raters and assessment delivery that can be passed on to the clients and users of the system.   The MITI will be commercially available in October of 2008 at a price of $135 per test.

Summary: The MITI test brings to the medical interpreting field an assessment that establishes a standardized approach to assessment that includes each of the critical elements of interpreting. By applying assessment expertise and cutting edge technology, the developers of the MITI test have endeavored to build a powerful and meaningful solution to the assessment needs of the emerging profession of the healthcare interpreter industry. Working with leaders in the field of medical interpretation and test development, the MITI test brings together a powerful solution to identified needs in the medical interpreting field for a reliable, valid, efficient and cost effective assessment solution.

Corporate Background of Vendors

The MITI test was a result of over two and a half years of planning and development with leaders in their respective fields. Fluency, Inc. via its sister interpreting company Language World Services, brings to the table 8 years of delivering on site professional healthcare interpreters in over 60 languages to Northern California. Avant Assessment is the country's leader in delivering online linguistic assessments to the educational field.

 MITI is a joint Venture between companies who are the leaders of their respective fields:

Fluency, Inc. (www.gofluently.com) is a pioneer in the field of Internet language management solutions for the healthcare interpreting industry. As an application service provider, Fluency licenses Internet solutions for managing and dispatching face-to-face interpreting services. The Internet Interpreter Scheduling System (I2S2) provides a single point of online entry for requesters of interpreting services, freelance professional interpreters and agencies nationwide. The system is currently in use in major medical systems such as Kaiser Permanente, Sutter Health, and Catholic Healthcare West, as well as HMO's, government agencies, and human service organizations in California, Illinois, Ohio, Nebraska, Texas, Connecticut and Tennessee. Fluency is currently working on the country's first regional solution to testing (utilizing the MITI for Spanish interpreters) and managing

face-to-face interpreters under sub contract with the Alameda County Coalition on Language Access in Healthcare (ACCLAH) currently funded by *The California Endowment.*

Avant Assessment (www.avantassessment.com) is a for-profit Oregon-based company dedicated to creating and delivering web-based language tests. Language tests are the only kind of assessments Avant makes, and they have clients in the academic (K-12 and university), corporate, and government markets. Since it was founded in 2001, Avant has had a research partnership with the Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), a National Foreign Language Resource Center, at the University of Oregon. This partnership has enabled Avant to administer more than 1.5 million web-based language tests to date.

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