

Title: Testing for Level 3 Attainment and Beyond in the Overseas Russian Flagship Program: Comparing Interlanguage Speech Samples Elicited through the European Framework (“TORFL”) and the ILR/OPI Elicitation Techniques
Author: Maria D. Lekic (Univ. of Maryland and ACTR)

Approximately 30 U. S. graduate students have completed the Russian Flagship Program at St. Petersburg University over the course of the past 3 years, most of them with reading, listening, and speaking proficiency scores in the ILR 3-range. Participants are tested by ACTR and St. Petersburg University pre- and post-program, using separately administered ILR-referenced and EU-referenced testing batteries. Recorded speech samples are collected as a standardized part of both the EU and the ILR oral proficiency test administration for each participant. The resulting parallel speech data samples are analyzed in terms of frequency and density of established as well as emerging Level –3 interlanguage speech characteristics. The findings of the analysis have consequences for curriculum design at the advanced and superior level. The analysis also may be seen to shed useful light on the strengths and limitations of the two predominant proficiency testing systems: the ILR and the TORFL testing constructs and their respective elicitation techniques.