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Cumann na Teangeolaíochta Feidhmi
Irish Association for Applied Linguistics

**IRAAL Guest Lecture hosted by the School of Languages, Literature, Culture and
Communication, University of Limerick**

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Interpreting Standards in Language Testing

Professor Barry OSullivan, Roehampton University

Abstract

With the move to more transparency of standards in language education and assessment has come an increased reliance on systematic descriptors of language such as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the Canadian Language Benchmarks and the Australian Language Standards. While these and other documents have undoubtedly raised awareness of the need for a common understanding and interpretation of level (and have provided us with the common language with which to negotiate these), there is growing concern that the interpretation of level in particular has not been as systematic as originally hoped. This is of particular concern with regards to the international language testing industry. In this talk, I'd like to explore the way in which particular examination boards interpret level and to discuss the implications of the findings which suggest that there are often quite significant differences in the way they go about demonstrating the level of their tests.

Bio Details

Barry OSullivan is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Roehampton University. He is particularly interested in issues related to performance testing, test validation and test-

data management and analysis. He has lectured for many years on various aspects of language testing, and is currently Director of the Centre for Language Assessment Research (CLARe).

Barrys publications have appeared in a number of international journals and he has presented his work at international conferences around the world. He is very active in language testing around the world and currently works with government ministries, universities and test developers in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Central America. (More details: <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/staff/BarryO'Sullivan/>)

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