A language proficiency interview (LPI) is where a person's speaking ability in a foreign language is assessed in a face-to-face interview with a native-level speaker. This book looks at how good a measure of speaking ability an LPI provides. It would primarily be useful to language testers, but would also be of interest to language teachers and researchers in second language acquisition. There are 14 papers by academic authors from a wide variety of disciplines. As there are no chapter summaries, the reader must plow through a lot of jargon to understand the issues and conclusions. Data are drawn from both native English speakers learning foreign languages and speakers of other languages studying English. The transcripts show how difficult it is for testers to elicit and for students to produce a smooth flow of talk. Many of the contributors compare LPIS to natural conversation. Differences arise because the purpose of an LPI is to obtain a ratable sample of speech, not to hold a conversation: the tester largely controls the topics, who speaks and for how long. One author points out, however, that many interactions in English for non-native speakers also occur in interview-like situations. Some problems with LPIS are cultural. For example, in an interview in English the interviewees may provide short literal answers to questions because they do not realize that a question is an invitation to talk. In Korean, interviewees may not understand that spoken confirmation sequences, which would be unnecessary in English, help to establish the participants' status and power relationships. Two alternatives to LPIS are considered. One is the simulated oral proficiency interview, where students listen to and record their responses on tape. This is quicker and cheaper to administer than an LPI, but is of course less interactive and further removed from a conversation. The other alternative is for students to record their own conversation with a native-level speaker. While the writer lists the micro-skills that contribute to successful conversation, she has not worked out the rating scheme. “Talking and Testing” provides a comprehensive examination of the problems of language proficiency interviews and is an important text in the field of language testing. It will make you consider the meaning of what goes on in this kind of language test, whether you are the tester, testee, or an interested observer.