

Voir dire of person of possible limited English proficiency

To establish “limited English proficiency” so that an interpreter is necessary:

- ask open-ended questions
- require complete sentences as answers.

Routine questions answered in a couple of words fail to reveal true language abilities.

Suggested questions:

1. Tell the court how old you are.
2. Describe your education.
3. What kind of work did you do before coming to Wisconsin? What kind of work do you do now? What do you like or dislike about your job?
4. How many children do you have? How many people do you support?
5. Describe some of the things or people you see in the courtroom.
6. Describe how comfortable you are speaking and understanding English.

At the end of this colloquy, make a finding both as to:

- need for an interpreter and
- limited English proficiency

If in doubt, interpreter should be appointed.