Understanding the communicative competency represented by ITA language certification scores

Fluency Allows:
All TA assignments, including serving as sole instructor

Pass - Strong Proficiency

Uses language with ease; able to talk at length about a variety of academic / professional topics concretely and abstractly, support opinions, give evidence, hypothesize, go beyond the topic if needed, respond effectively to questions, interact in a variety of contexts. Linguistic errors may still be present but do not interfere with communication; integrates individual language skills while handling the cognitive load of communicating content. Can be understood without effort by a wide variety of audiences.

Fluency Allows:
All TA assignments

Restricted I - Adequate Proficiency

Despite language gaps, can generally give information in extended discourse; can talk about specific, but not all, topics in detail; linguistic errors may interfere, but still able to support opinions, respond to questions, and use appropriate compensation strategies; some gaps in ability to integrate individual language skills while handling the cognitive task of communicating content. Some listener effort, but can be generally understood by people not used to communicating with nonnative speakers.

Moving to a higher level typically requires 25-35 hours of language work per semester for several semesters.

Fluency Allows:
One-on-one sessions only

Restricted II - Limited Proficiency

Lacks ability to give information in extended discourse; can ask and answer simple questions on familiar topics; often relies on listener to "guess" meaning and reword to clarify. Linguistic errors frequently interfere with communication; often unable to integrate individual language skills while handling the cognitive task of communicating content. Much listener effort, especially for people not used to communicating with nonnative speakers.

Not Ready - Weak Proficiency

Academic communication generally not effective; speaks with much effort, often using pre-set phrases. Linguistic gaps seriously hinder communication; can respond only to simple questions or questions related to practiced content. Excessive listener effort: difficult even for people used to communicating with nonnative speakers.

Intensive language work (35–40 hours for several semesters) strongly recommended to help speaker develop the fluency needed for academic work.

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