



SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR CLS STAFF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

This directory lists all staff at CLS who have identified themselves as having any second language ability. Entries are arranged alphabetically by language and by staff name within each language. The ratings are based on staff members' self-assessments and are therefore not objective. We asked each staff member to assess her or his skill level according to the definitions below.

Staff language ability should be taken into account for case assignment purposes for intake as well as ongoing representation. However, except as provided in the Spanish and Cambodian protocols, bilingual staff in the directory are not expected to serve as interpreters or translators for other staff. They only fill in temporarily, to assist a client until a professional interpreter can be obtained.

Language Skill Levels

"Minimal"

- You barely know the language at all.
- You can say and/or understand the most basic of phrases (Hello, How are you?, What is your name?) but you cannot carry on a basic conversation of any length.

"Limited"

- You can carry on a very basic conversation about familiar themes (where you live, where you are from, directions to and from a place) but quickly get lost when the conversation diverges from your limited range of vocabulary.
- This is "survival" proficiency, as you know enough to exchange the most basic, necessary information.
- You only know the most basic grammar, and speak in only one or two tenses.

"Moderate"

- You can carry on basic conversations on a fairly wide range of topics, provided that the foreign language speaker speaks clearly and is patient regarding your responses.
- You frequently need to ask the foreign language speaker to repeat themselves and you need to phrase your responses carefully.
- You know few if any technical or specialized terms, and your grammar is inconsistent.
- You are not highly confident in your ability but believe you can generally get by when needed.

"Fully Conversant"

- You are generally confident speaking with people, and you can function at a normal pace of conversation without constant repeating or rephrasing.
- You can communicate on a wide range of topics but occasionally have trouble understanding or expressing certain words.
- You usually overcome this problem by describing the word you're looking for ("What is the word for the type of jewelry that you put on your wrist?").
- You know some specialized/technical terms but only those you have had to learn for a particular purpose.
- Your grammar is generally correct, but you consistently make certain types of errors.

"Fluent"

- You speak a language confidently with little doubt or hesitation and with very few errors and misunderstandings.
- You understand people who speak rapidly in a range of accents.
- Your vocabulary includes specialized terms, even if you may occasionally need to use a dictionary or ask for clarification.
- To be considered "fluent" you need not speak like an educated native speaker of that language. However, you should be able to communicate effectively, in a grammatically appropriate manner, on the widest possible range of topics.