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COMMUNICATIONS

– Individual Competence Categories –

Accuracy: This indicates the student's attention to grammatical detail such as appropriate tense usage, prepositions and word order.

Fluency: This indicates the student's oral confidence and can often be measured by focusing on thinking time, pauses when speaking, and general searching for vocabulary.

Aural comprehension: This indicates the student's ability to understand the spoken word. It can be measured by focusing on amount of repetition needed, whether the student is listening to a native speaker or not, whether spoken at normal speed, and whether face-to-face or cassette based listening.

Vocabulary range: This indicates the range of vocabulary a student actively uses, and passively understands. It can be measured by noting repetition, and use of natural or 'fixed' expressions, phrasal verbs and vocabulary outside the student's field.

Appropriacy: This indicates the student's awareness of formal and informal language. Register is similar to this and means correct level and style of language for a situation. For example, when greeting someone in a formal situation one should say "how do you do" rather than "hi".

Pronunciation: This indicates the student's ability to pronounce the language as it should be spoken. It can be measured by noting first language accent, correct word stress such as 'presen**T**ation', and minimal pairs such as 'very' and not 'wery'

Intonation: This is the natural rhythm that all languages have. One could compare it to singing to the correct tune. It can be measured by natural rise and fall, and pausing appropriately, otherwise known as 'chunking'.

Structural complexity: This indicates the student's varied use of grammatical and lexical structures. It can be measured by noting the student's willingness to use structures beyond his/her level, his/her knowledge of more complex noun and verb phrases and overall command of syntax.

Business competence: This indicates the student's competence in differing business functions such as meetings, negotiations, presentations etc.

Social competence: This indicates the student's competence in differing social functions such as greetings, introductions, small-talk and entertaining visitors.

Writing: Students' written language often varies greatly to their spoken ability. Written word should be measured for accuracy, vocabulary range, appropriacy and structural complexity as above, but should also be measured for spelling, cohesion and coherence.