



ILR 101

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Language Testing and Assessment Unit, FBI

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Topics Covered

- ILR background ✓
- ILR scale ✓
- Language skills ✓
- ILR Skill Level Descriptions ✓
- In-house testing studies ✓
- Native speakers/heritage speakers/learners
- Translation text difficulty levels
- Audio text difficulty levels
- ILR-based translation exams
- Tests administered
- Testing policies and procedures





Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)

- Organization of representatives from different government agencies that provides language services along with other language professionals
- Goals
 - Standardization of testing criteria
 - Collaboration of training, testing, and translation methodology between agencies
 - Dissemination of new language information and practices from both inside and outside the government arena



ILR Skill Level Descriptions

- Descriptions of the minimum language requirements a person must have in order to perform certain tasks in a skill.
- Skills measured:
 - Listening
 - Reading
 - Speaking
 - Writing
 - Translation
 - Interpretation
- Used as a standard for all US Government agencies
- Scale ranges from 0 to 5, with plus levels



ILR Scale

- Ordinal scale ranging from 0 to 5
 - Interval scale: distances between levels are equidistant
 - Ordinal scale: distances between levels increase as levels increase



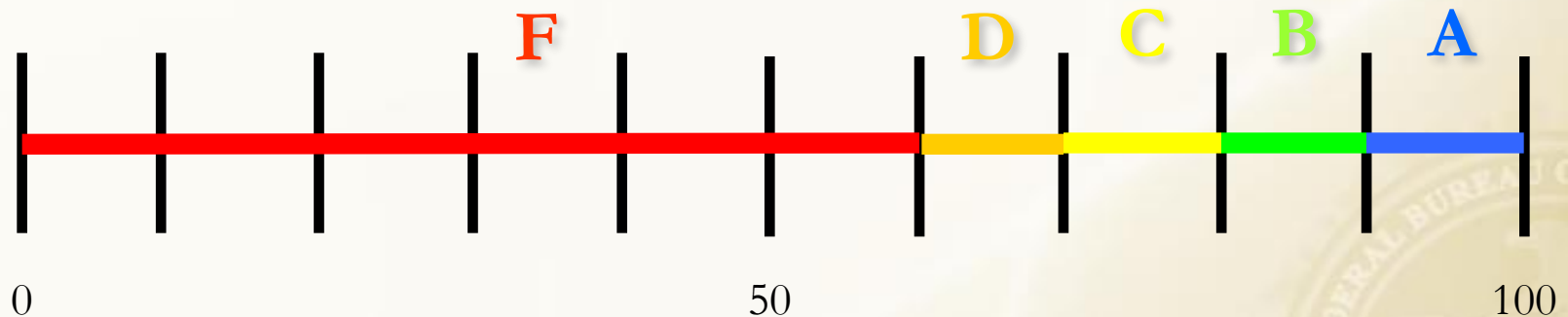


Typical Interval Scales

Surveys:

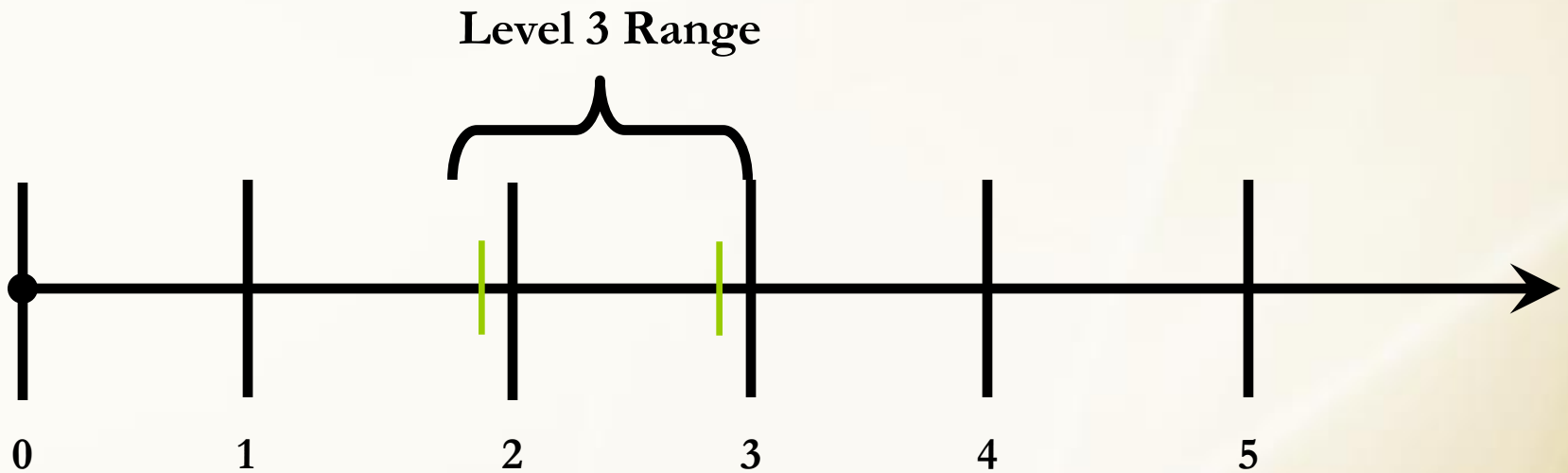


Academic:





ILR Skill Level Descriptions





Cooking Scale

Products:

- 0: No Cook
- Combines ingredients arriving at different times.
- 1: Preparation
- Heat ingredients to proper temperature
 - Andre Terrail's pike dumplings
 - Poached foie gras with Pinot gris wine, turnip leaves, and dried beetroot
- 2: Follow-up
- Combines ingredients arriving at different times
 - Marinated Gulf shrimp with Spanish paprika and toasted Marcona almonds, pink grapefruit emulsion
 - Braised lobster with sea-urchin sauce, velvety coral lentils, olive pulp in aspic
- 3: Category
- Whipped mild cocoa cream with saffron
- 4: Chef
- Manage multiple dishes
 - Hamburger
 - Casserole
 - Uses advanced techniques to prepare complex menus.
- 5: Master Chef



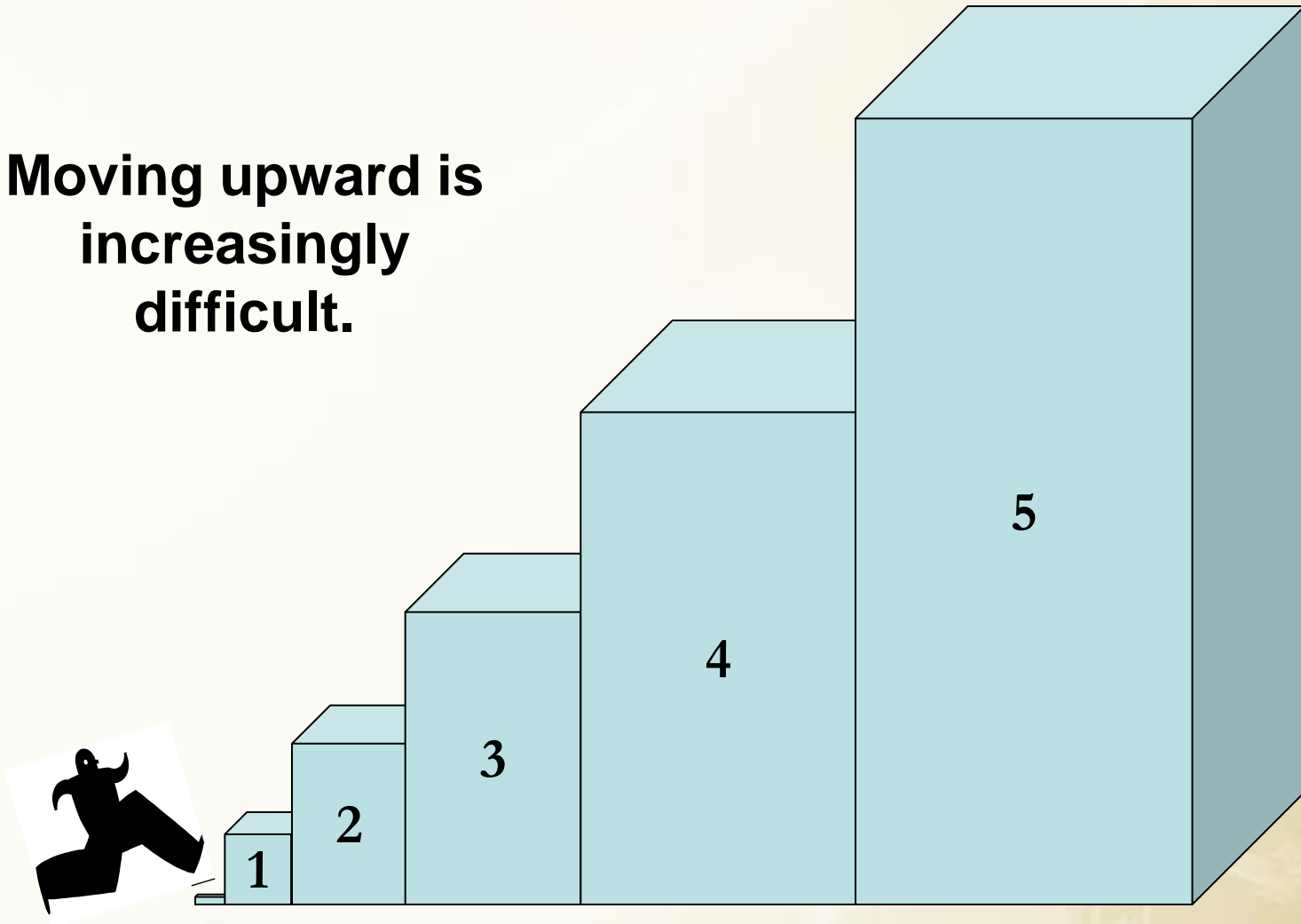
Hiking Scale

- 0: Unable to hike, even on paved roads.
- 1: Able to hike on flat, paved paths.
- 2: Able to complete most regional hikes, staying mostly on course, despite minor geographic obstacles.
- 3: Able to complete multi-day hikes that may involve unmarked trails or rigorous topographical changes in a variety of climates.
- 4: Able to accomplish treks across traverse terrain that require specialized equipment and skills. May serve as a guide.
- 5: Able to successfully summit any peak or complete any course on all attempts.



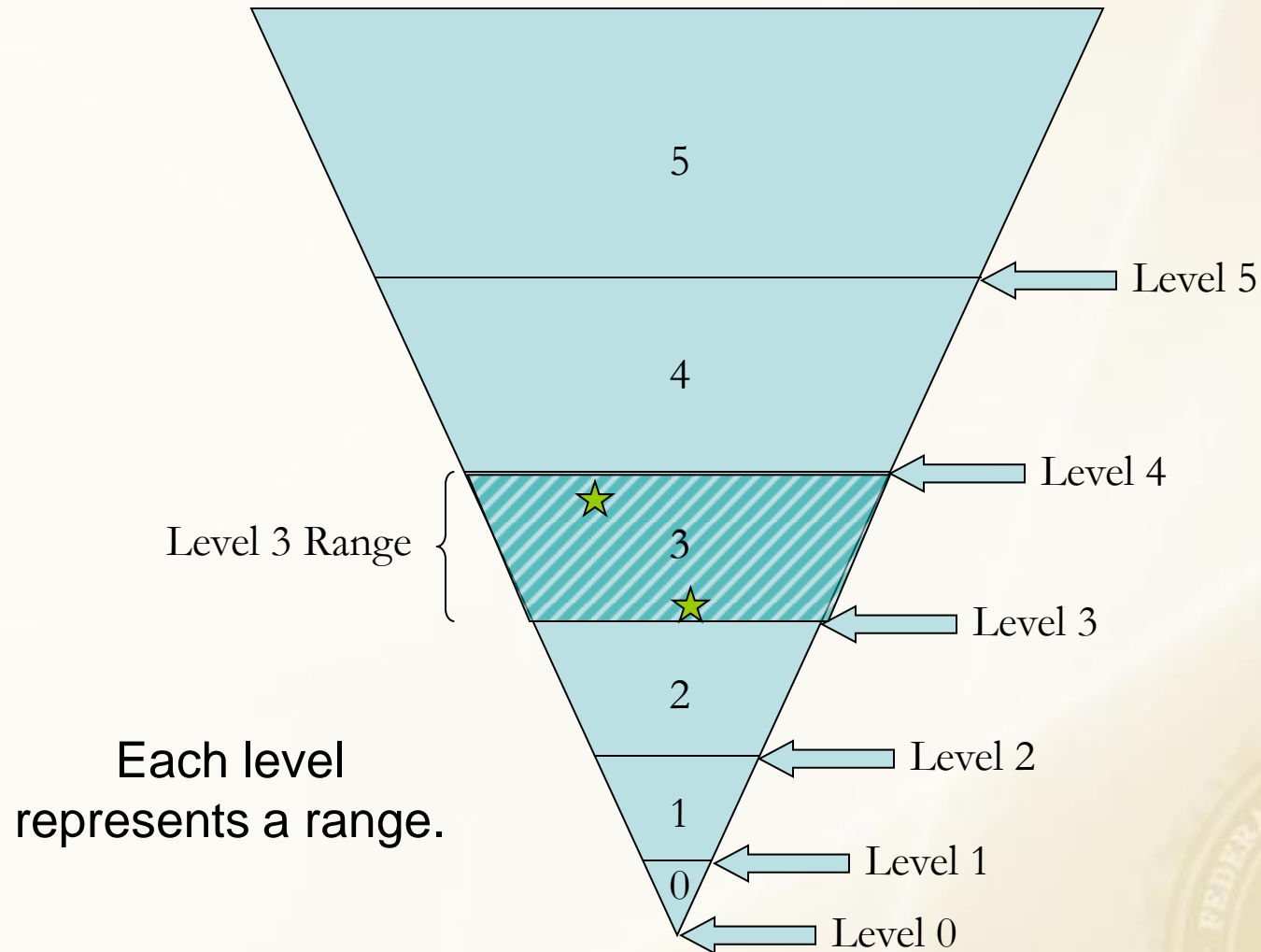
ILR Scale

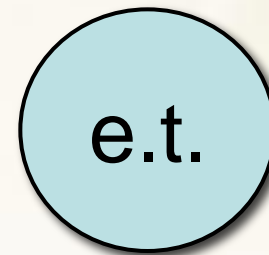
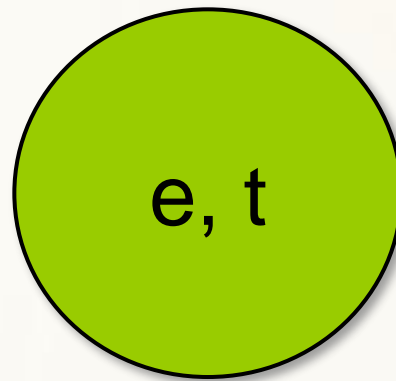
Moving upward is increasingly difficult.





ILR Skill Levels







ate

eat

e.t.

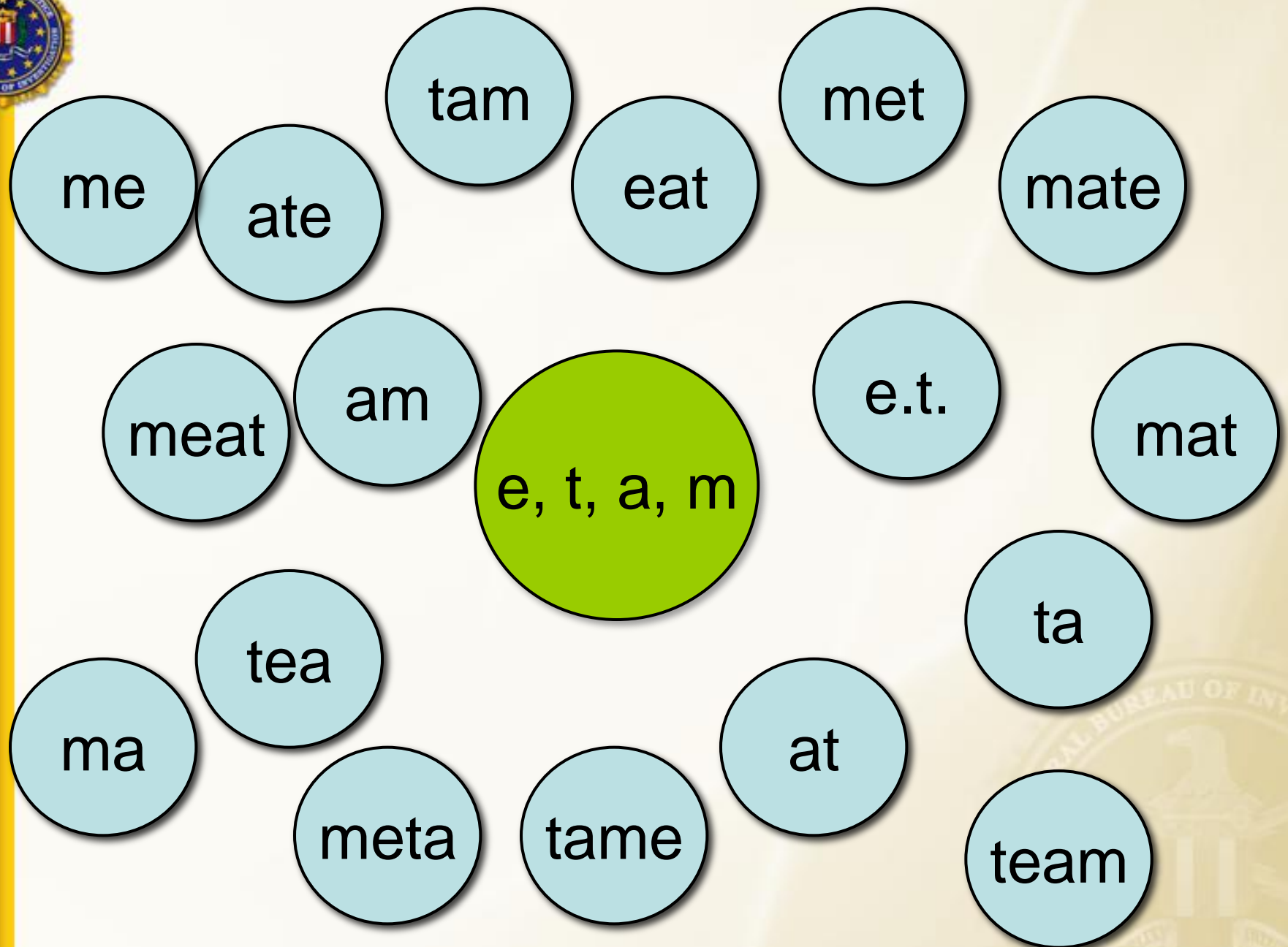
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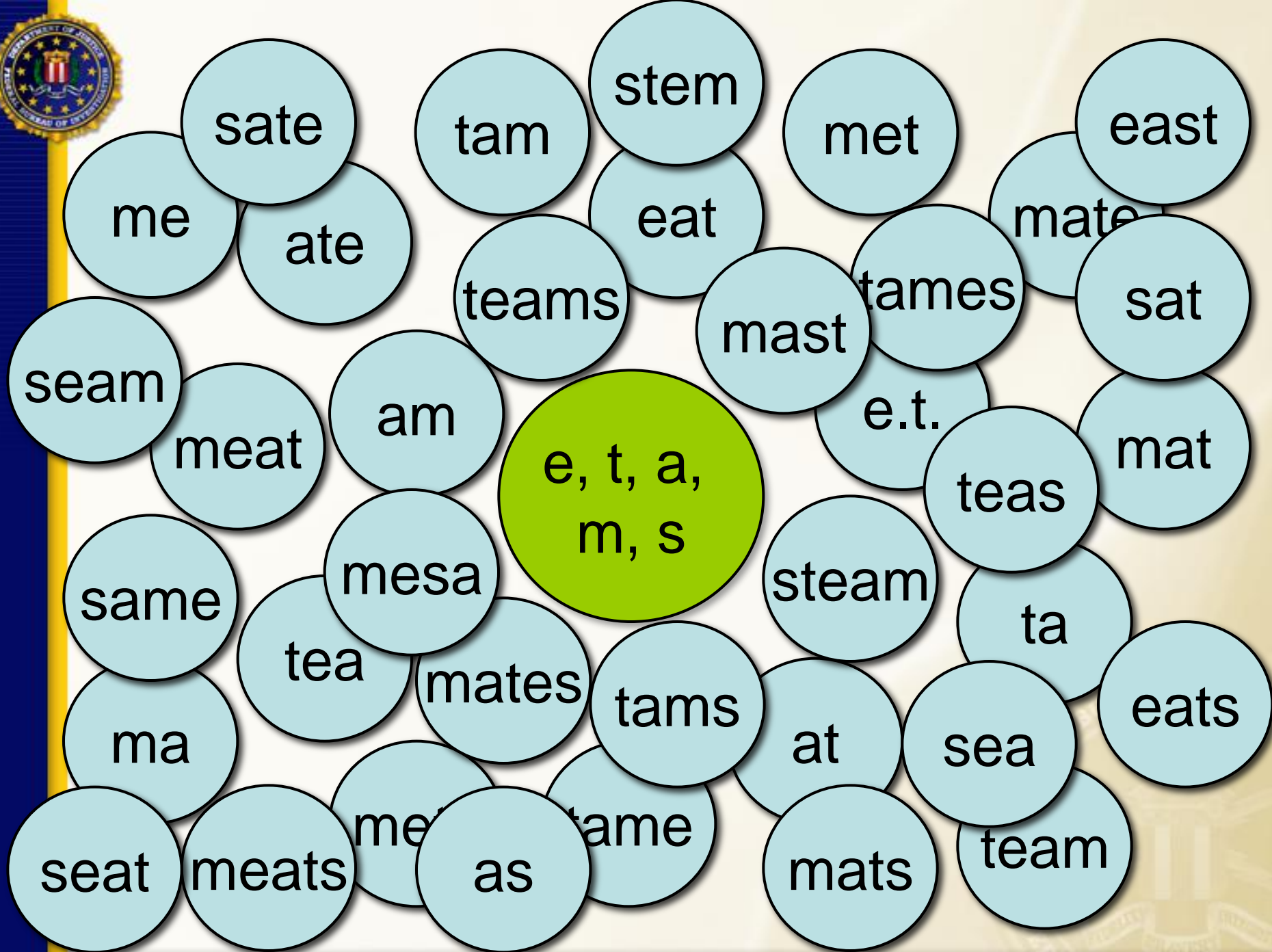
tea

ta

at









ILR Skill Level Descriptions

- Speaking
 - Listening
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Translation
 - Interpretation
 - For full texts, go to:
 - www.govtilr.org
- Proficiency
(Single Skills)
- Performance
(Combined Skills)





Speaking 3

(General Professional Proficiency)

The individual **can** effectively combine structure and vocabulary to convey his/her meaning accurately.

structure and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Individual sounds are accurate; but stress, intonation, and pitch control may be faulty.



ILR Levels 2, 2+, 3

Level	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
2	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.	Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements.	Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context.	Able to write routine social correspondence and prepare documentary materials required for most limited work requirements.
2+	Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective.	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence.	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests.	Shows ability to write with some precision and in some detail about most common topics.
3	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.	Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field.	Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension of a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects.	Able to use the language effectively in most formal and informal written exchanges on practical social and professional topics.



ILR Level 2

Speaking	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.
Listening	Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations on routine social demands and limited job requirements.
Reading	Sufficient comprehension to read simple, authentic written material in a form equivalent to usual printing or typescript on subjects within a familiar context.
Writing	Able to write routine social correspondence and prepare documentary materials required for most limited work requirements.



ILR Level 2+

Speaking	Able to satisfy most work requirements with language usage that is often, but not always, acceptable and effective.
Listening	Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social demands and most conversations on work requirements as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence.
Reading	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual material in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special professional interests.
Writing	Shows ability to write with some precision and in some detail about most common topics.



ILR Level 3

Speaking	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.
Listening	Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field.
Reading	Able to read within a normal range of speed and with almost complete comprehension of a variety of authentic prose material on unfamiliar subjects.
Writing	Able to use the language effectively in most formal and informal written exchanges on practical social and professional topics.

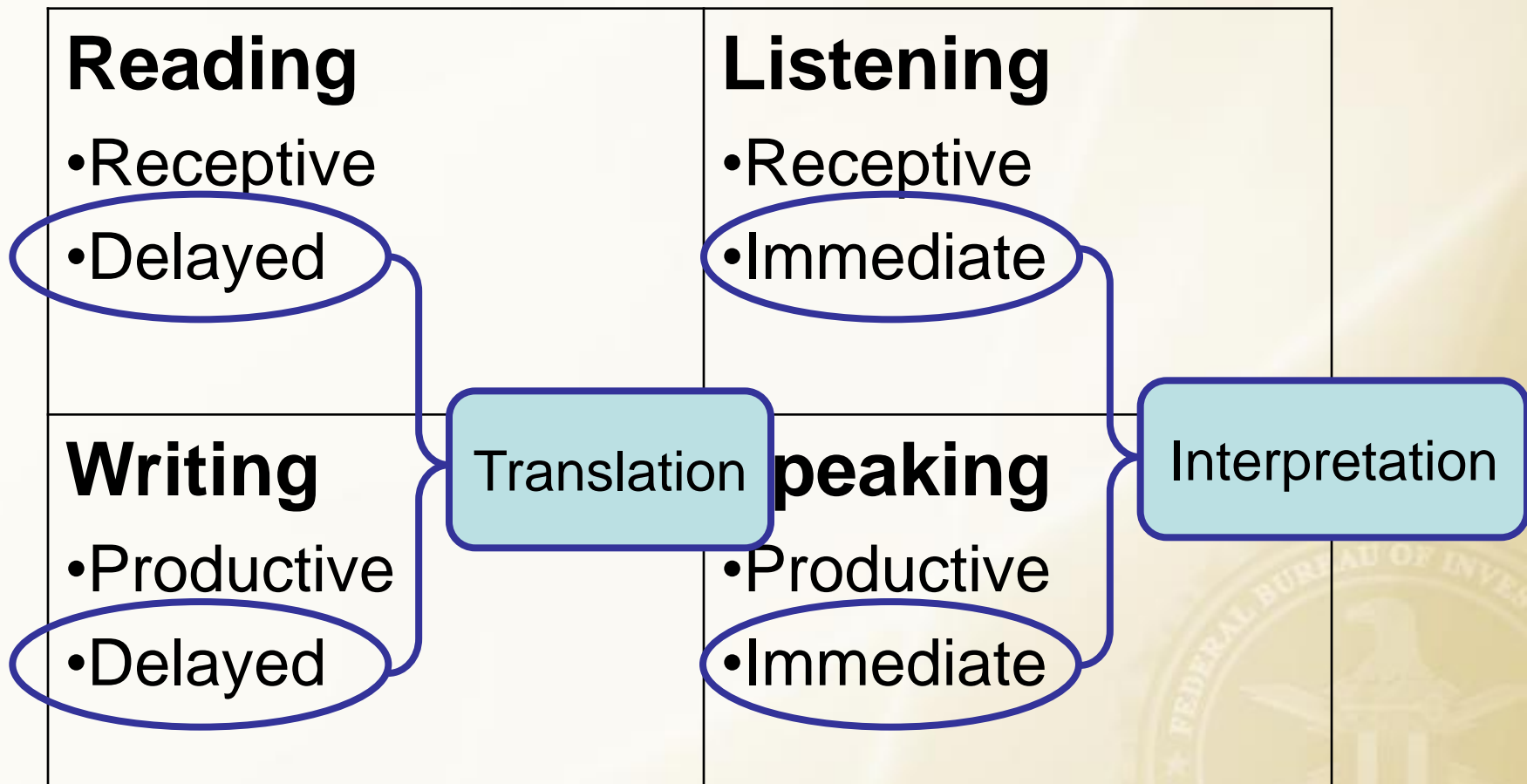


“Knowing” a language

- Language skills are **separate**.
 - A person can have different proficiency levels in different skills.
 - Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing
- Language skills are **combined**.
 - A person must combine various skills in order to perform language tasks.
 - Holding a conversation, translating a document, monitoring a phone call, interpreting

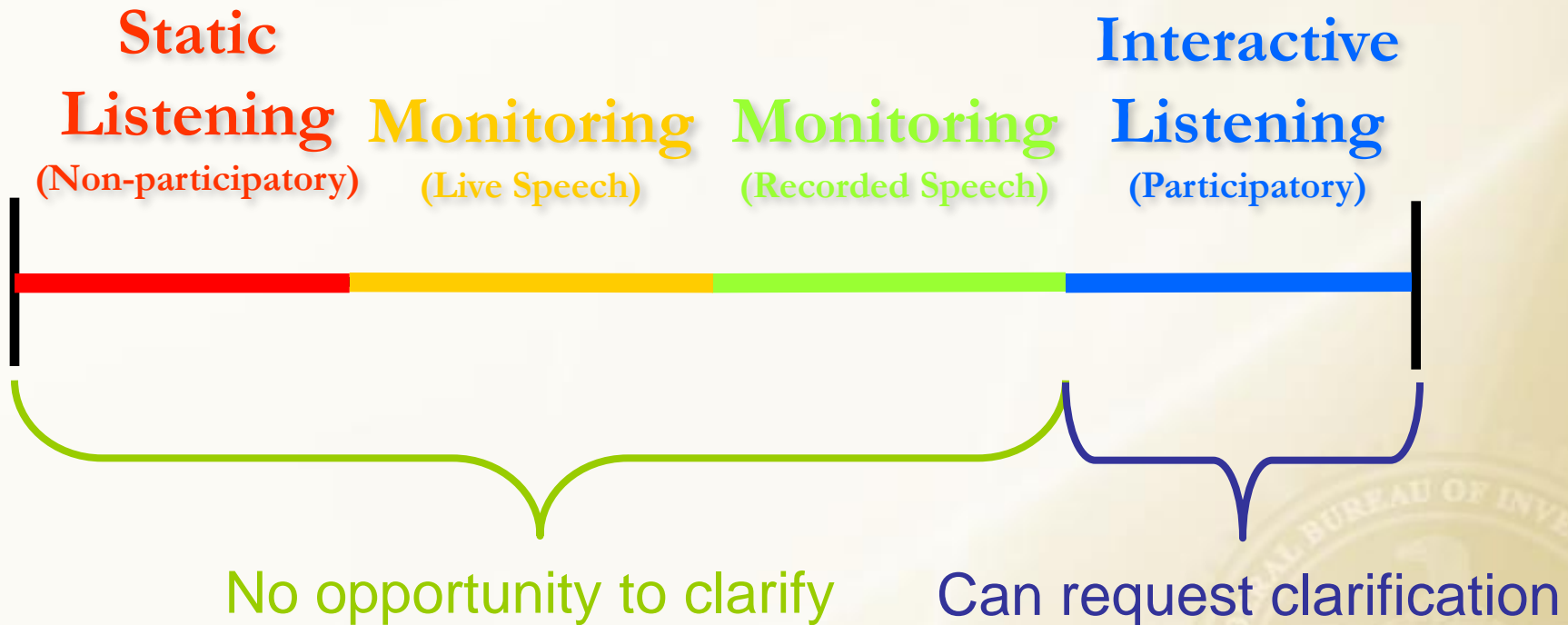


Four Primary Skills



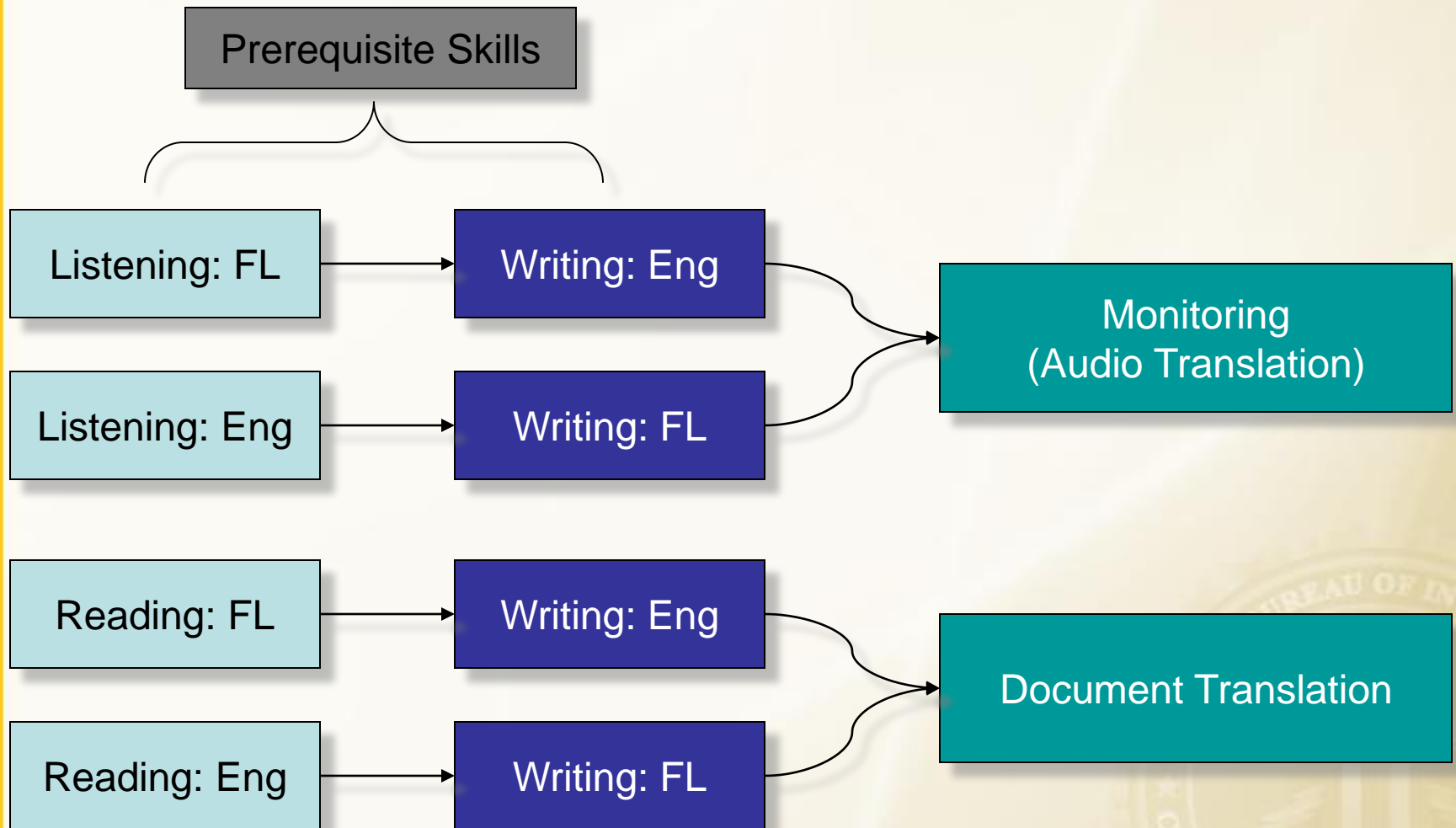


Types of Listening



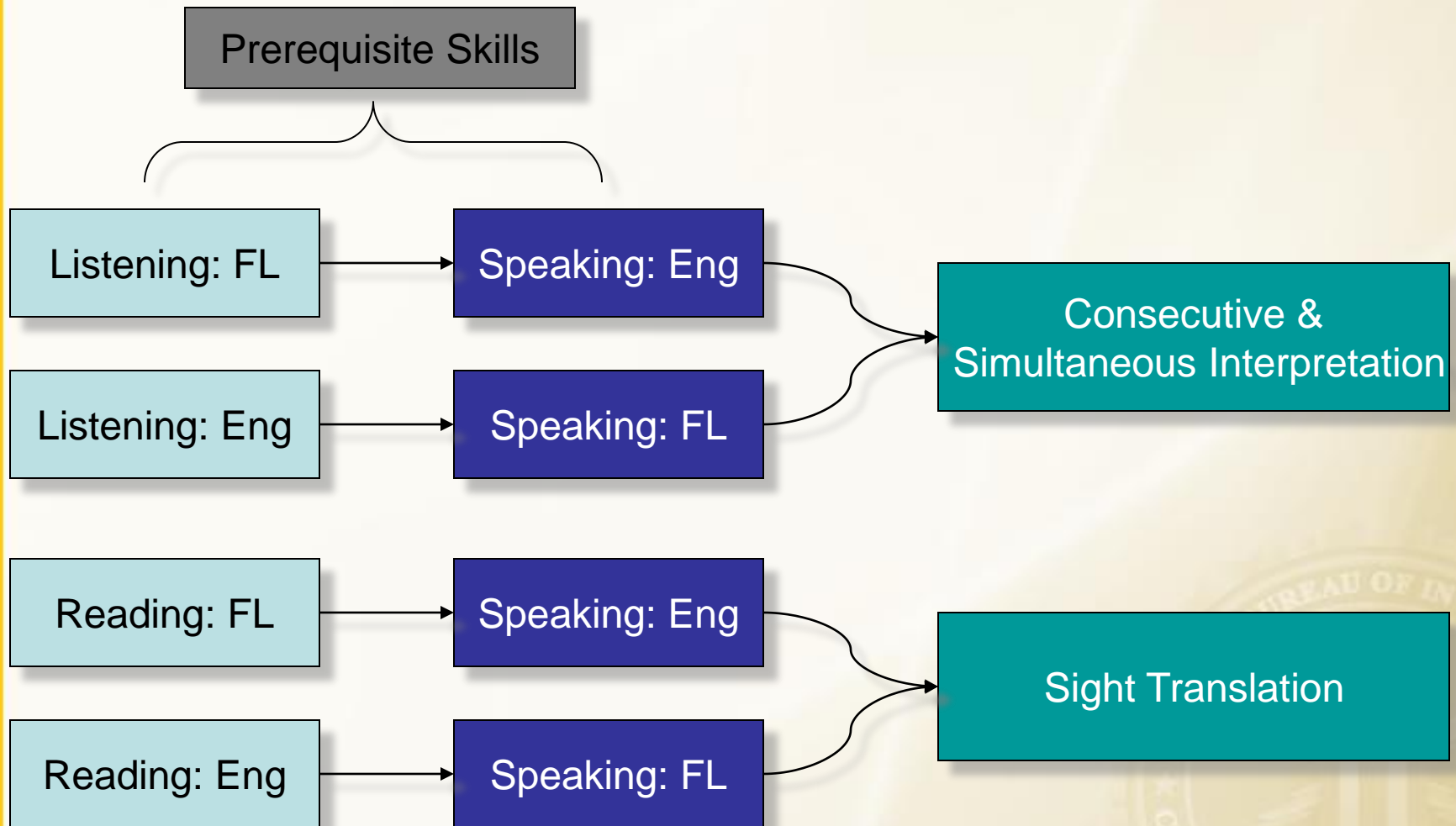


Translation



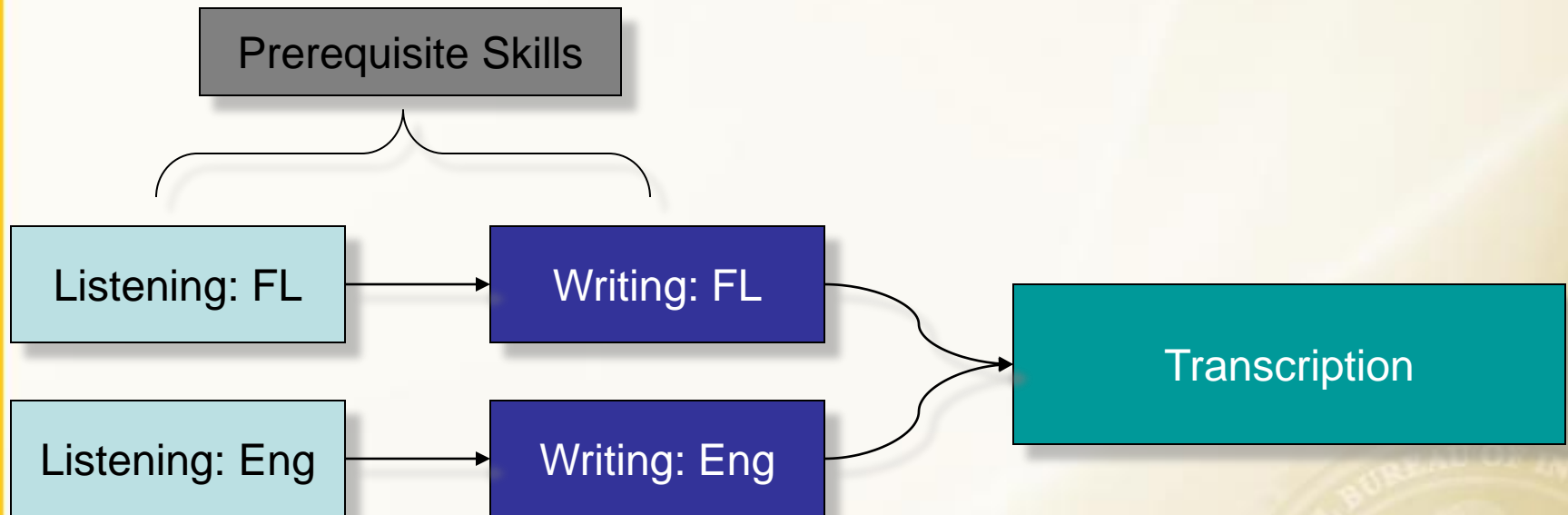


Interpretation



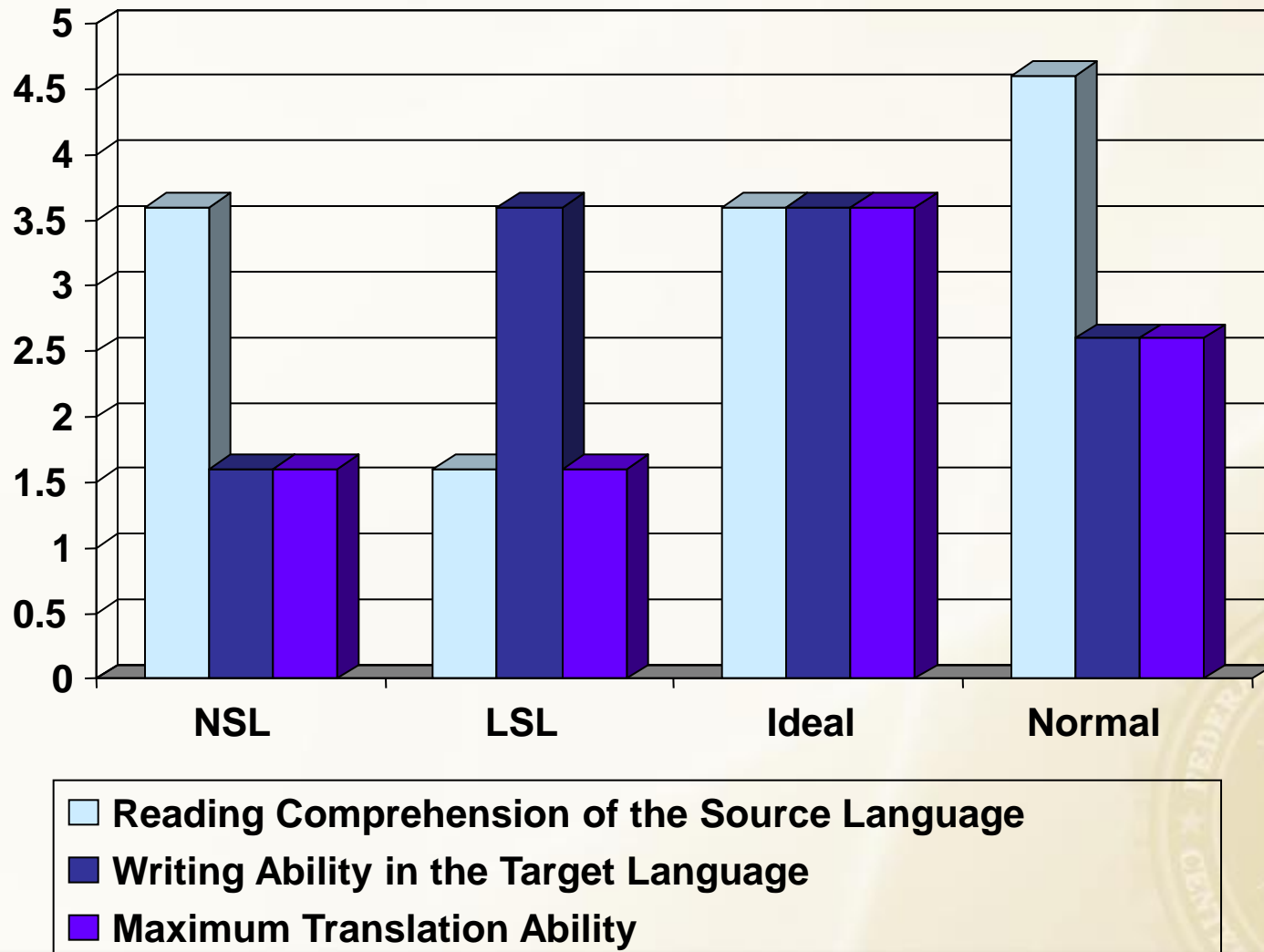


Transcription (Monolingual)





Capacity to Translate





From theory to practice

Hypothesis 1:

If you can read a foreign language, you can translate.

True or **False**

Hypothesis 2:

If the foreign language is your native language and you are proficient in English, you can translate.

True or **False**

Testing one prerequisite skill is not sufficient to predict translation ability.



Post 9/11 Arabic Applicants

	Total	L1: Arabic	L1: English
Total Applicants	1438	1077	482
Passed Listening (DLPT)	755 (52.5%)	514	229
Failed Listening (DLPT)	683 (47.5%)	563	253
Passed Reading (DLPT)	1067 (74.2%)	834	331
Failed Reading (DLPT)	371 (25.8%)	243	151
Passed Translation Test	289 (20.1%)	202	113
Failed Translation Test	1149 (79.9%)	875	369
Passed Reading/Failed TT	781 (54.3%)	634	221
Failed Reading/Passed TT	12 (0.8%)	10	1



Percent Concordance: Final Derived VTE and EWT Score

	Italian Overall (%)	Vietnamese Overall (%)	Turkish Overall (%)	Average Overall (%)
Exact Match	3.75	19.82	2.50	8.69
Within Level Match	28.75	50.16	26.30	35.07
One Level Difference (VTE higher or lower)	36.25	32.39	31.30	33.28
Greater than One Level Difference (VTE higher)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Greater than One Level Difference (VTE lower)	35.00	17.45	42.50	31.65



Practice Translation: English to English

Paraphrase the following sentences

- I'm going to throw out my sandwich.
- The child toddled around the door.
- The person with the intention to dispose of her bread-enveloped meal is me.
- The defendant spoke in an awkward, unbalanced manner about that particular room purposed for recreation.
- The defendant, a two-year-old, has a wife and children living abroad, said the embassy's office manager.
- At the time of the apparent abduction, which was first reported by the local paper, the accused was traveling with two colleagues, officials said.
- The sooner, the better.



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