The Keys to Assessing Language Performance: Lessons Learned from Proficiency Guidelines
语言测试之关键：从语言能力水平标准谈起

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**University of Rhode Island**

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NECLTA Workshop
Tufts University

THE KEYS TO ASSESSING LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE

The Keys to Assessing Language Performance: Teacher´s Manual

By Paul Sandrock

Publisher: ACTFL

Print member price: $22.95

Print non-member price: $26.95

eBook member price: $10.95

eBook non-member price: $12.95

Students continually ask, "Does this count?" "Is this on the test?" They want to know how they'll be evaluated. Discover how to answer these questions in ways that shape student learning and keep teaching focused on what really matters. Written by language expert Paul Sandrock, this superb manual clarifies precisely what language educators need to understand in order to successfully assess student performance.

Relevant to new teachers and seasoned professionals alike, Sandrock provides step-by-step guidance on how to design assessments, illuminates the process of designing rubrics that focus on proficiency and helps educators create assessments that motivate students to offer language samples that accomplish authentic purposes. School administrators will also benefit from the section that focuses on the impact of performance assessment on instruction and program design.
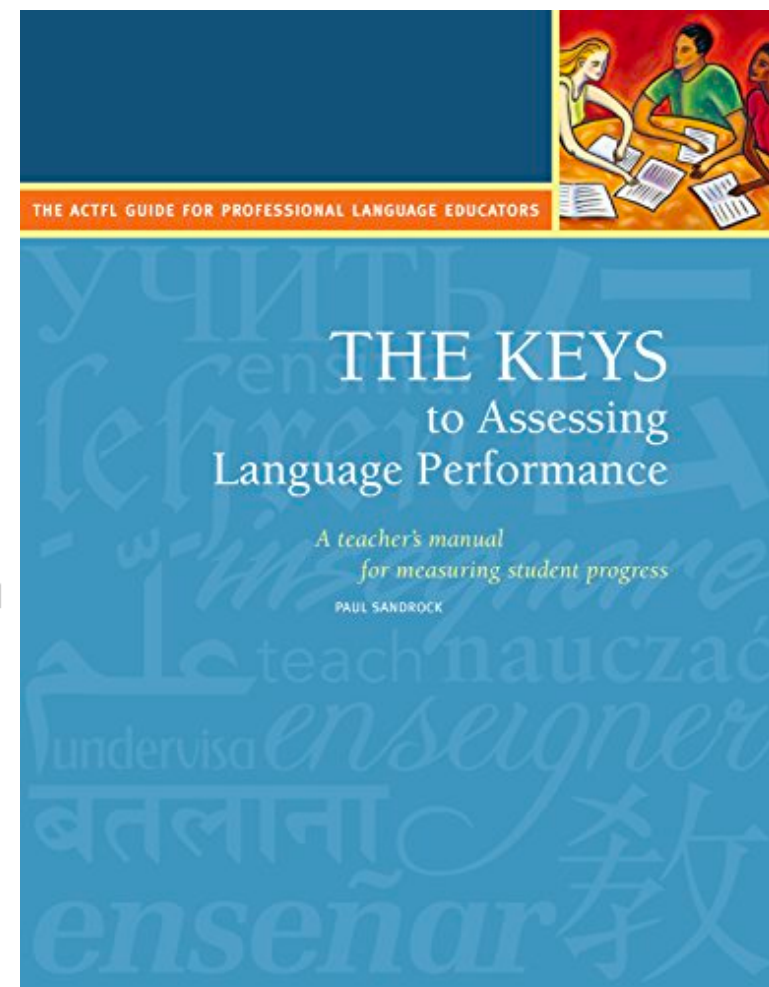
BUY THE BOOK!

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Outline of Presentation

1. **Background:**
   - **Clarifying standards**
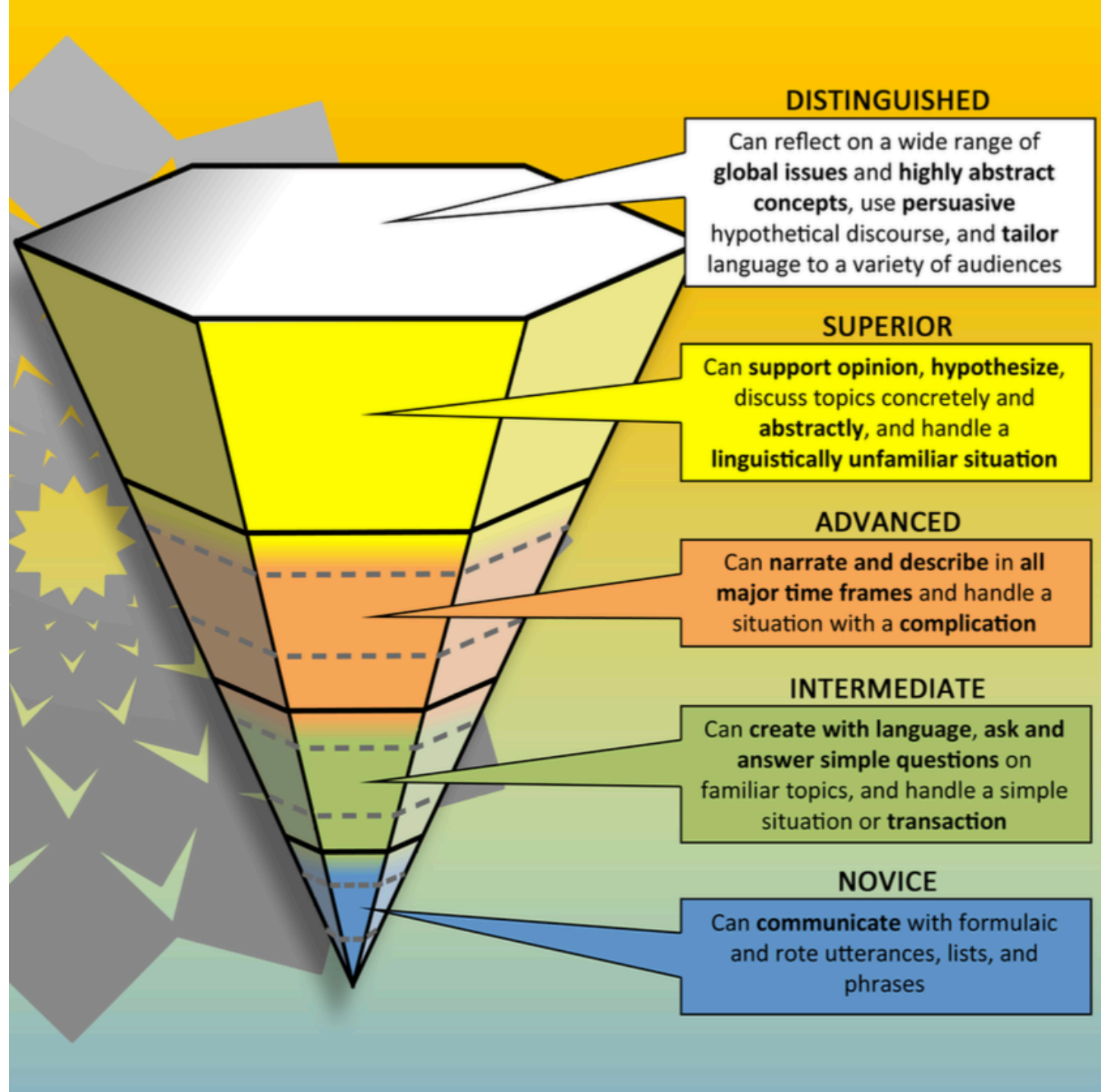   - **Defining communication**

2. Assessing students' performance and proficiency
   - OPI, WPT
   - AAPPL, AP Chinese
   - IPA

3. Examples
   - Novice→ Intermediate level
   - Intermediate→ Advanced level
   - Increasing students' motivation
   - Designing your own assessment

- ✓ Why do we assess students?

- ✓ What information do we want to learn through assessment?

- ✓ What could we do with the information gained through assessment?

DISTINGUISHED

Can reflect on a wide range of **global issues** and **highly abstract concepts**, use **persuasive** hypothetical discourse, and **tailor** language to a variety of audiences

SUPERIOR

Can **support opinion, hypothesize,** discuss topics concretely and **abstractly,** and handle a **linguistically unfamiliar situation**

ADVANCED

Can **narrate and describe** in **all major time frames** and handle a situation with a **complication**

INTERMEDIATE

Can **create with language, ask and answer simple questions** on familiar topics, and handle a simple situation or **transaction**

NOVICE

Can **communicate** with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases

ACTFL World Readiness Standards

CULTURES
Interact with cultural competence and understanding

CONNECTIONS
Connect with other disciplines and acquire information and diverse perspectives in order to use the language to function in academic and career-related situations

COMPARISONS
Develop insight into the nature of language and culture in order to interact with cultural competence

COMMUNICATION
Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes

COMMUNITIES
Communicate and interact with cultural competence in order to participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

How to *define* communication?

Expression Interpretation & Negotiation

of **meaning** in a given context.

Help students *communicate* in the target language!

Three modes of communication:

- **Expression**,
- **Interpretation** &
- **Negotiation**

of meaning in a context.

Interpretive: the appropriate interpretation of cultural meaning that is read, heard, or viewed.

Interpersonal: the active negotiation of intentions and meaning. Initiate, maintain, and (at some levels) sustain the conversation, making necessary adjustments and clarifications.

Presentational: The creation of oral and written messages to facilitate interpretation by listeners, readers, or viewers.

学生姓名：秦昊天　　　　　　成绩 90

一．看拼音写汉字．（6分）

枫 pí（　）　　　　　　　jué 心（决）
壶 gài（盖）　　　　　　　yīng（英）国
造 zhǐ（纸）　　　　　　　蒸汽 jī（机）

二．照例子写出下列字的偏旁部首．（10分）
例：说（讠）
冲（冫）　层（尸）　把（扌）　竹（朩）　让（讠）
怪（忄）　科（禾）　验（马）　位（亻）　片（片）

三．数笔画，填空．（10分）
"诗"一共有 8 画，左边是 讠，右边是 寺．
"首"一共有 9 画，第六画是 フ．
"破"一共有 10 画，左边是 石，右边是 皮．
"床"一共有 7 画，第三画是 厂． −2

四．选出下列句中划横线的字正确解释，在（　）里打√（5分）
1. 举头望明月
　√A 看　　　B 月亮　　　C 问
2. 低头思故乡
　　A 思考　　√B 思念　　　C 想法
3. 疑是地上霜
　　A 不觉得　√B 以为　　　C 不知道
4. 白日依山尽
　　A 白天　　　B 一天　　√C 太阳
5. 更上一层楼
　　A 上面　　　B 上边　　√C 上去

五．选词/字填空（13分）
1. 时候　　后来
（后来），他成了一名科学家．
昨天我回家的（时候），妈妈正在做饭．

9. Quiz on Chinese courtesy:

1) 你請中國朋友去你家吃飯，他們常回答：
"太麻煩 (máfán-troublesome) 你了！不要客氣了．"，你應該
哪裡，哪裡。

2) 客人送給你一個禮物，你應該說什麼？作什麼？
你太可愛了，要絕吞
（再客氣還是要給）

3) 吃飯以前，你應該對客人說什麼？
你作的飯那麼好吃！　✗
（還沒吃就說棒，太假了）

4) 吃飯的時候，坐在你旁邊的中國人總是給你菜，你應該說什麼？作什麼？
不用了，我會吃了，很飽
（道地美式中文）

5) 你先吃完了，別人還在吃，你應該說什麼？作什麼？
坐這那裡等你們吃好．這菜作的很好　✗

6) 客人說他要走了，你應該說什麼？
你慢走

How do we *teach* and *assess* language performance in given contexts?

Start from *performance tests*!
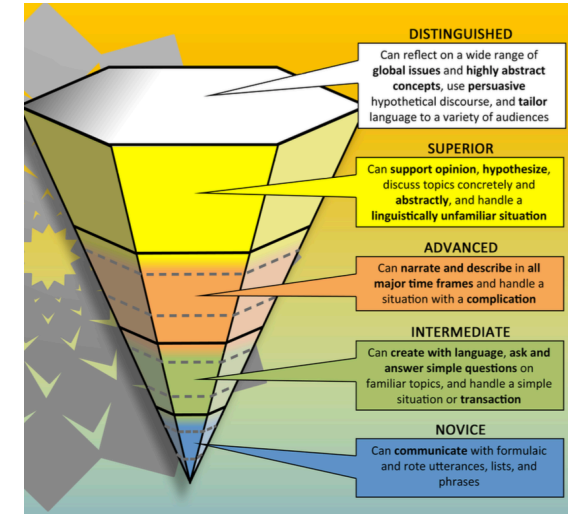
Outline of Presentation

1. Background:
   - Clarifying standards
   - Defining communication
2. **Assessing students' performance and proficiency**
   - **OPI, WPT**
   - **AAPPL, AP Chinese**
   - **IPA**
3. Examples
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Proficiency-based performance tests

- ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

- ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)

- ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)

- Advanced Placement (AP) Chinese

- Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)

- Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

  - 15-30 minutes interview

  - Is a standard procedure for global assessment of functional speaking ability. It measures language production holistically by determining patterns of strengths and weakness.

    - tasks, text type, accuracy and content areas

What is OPI? (2/3)

- face-to-face or telephonic assessment
  - Tester asks appropriate questions
  - Follows standardized structure and protocol
  - Adjusts the level of difficulty based on the testee's performance, in order to find the floor (lower limit)and ceiling (upper limit)
  - Evaluates based on the ACTFL guidelines (criterion referenced evaluation)

What is OPI？ (3/3)

- An OPI rating does not depend upon:
  - When, where, how long, what textbook one has used to learn the language
  - What kind of pedagogy or curriculum that one has experience with.

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Four major levels of proficiency

- Novice
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Superior
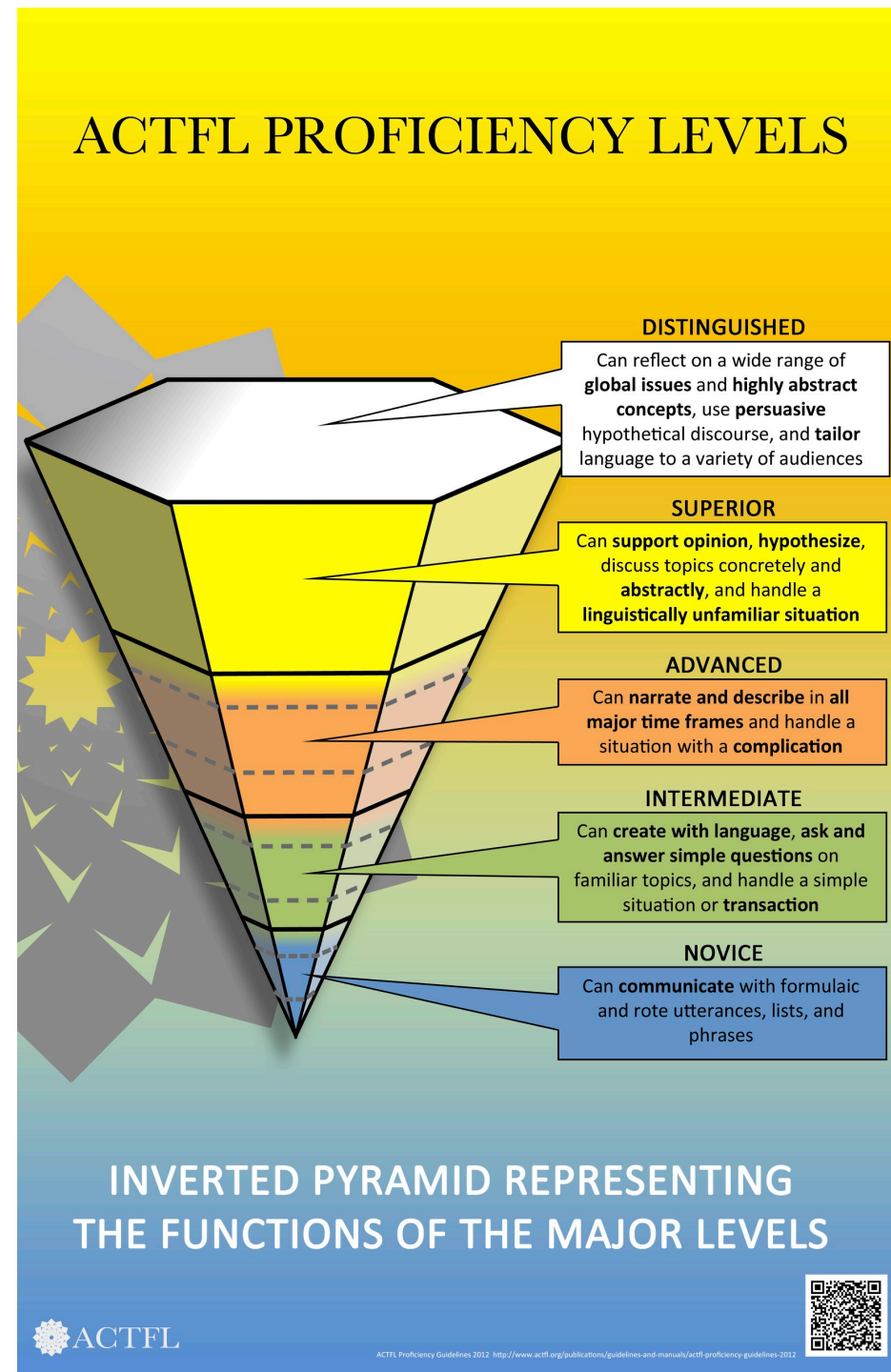
Four Assessment Criteria of OPI

- **<u>Global tasks/ Functions</u>** :   Real-world tasks that the speaker can do in the language.

- **<u>Context/Content</u>**:   Circumstances or settings in which a person uses language/ topics or themes of conversations.

- **<u>Accuracy/ Comprehensibility</u>**: Acceptability, quality, and precision of the message conveyed.

- **<u>Text Types</u>**:   Structure of the discourse

Table of Assessment Criteria for OPI

Proficiency Level*	Global Tasks and Functions	Context / Content	Accuracy	Text Type
Superior	Discuss topics extensively, support opinions and hypothesize. Deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation.	Most formal and informal settings. *Wide range of general interest topics and some special fields of interest and expertise.*	No pattern of errors in basic structures. Errors virtually never interfere with communication or distract the native speaker from the message.	Extended discourse
Advanced	Narrate and describe in major time frames and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication.	Some informal settings and a limited number of transactional situations. *Predictable, familiar topics related to daily activities.*	Understood, with some repetition, by speakers un accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.	Paragraphs
Intermediate	Create with language, initiate, maintain, and bring to a close simple conversations by asking and responding to simple questions.	Some informal settings and a limited number of transactional situations. *Predictable, familiar topics related to daily activities.*	Understood, with some repetition, by speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.	Discrete sentences
Novice	Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases	Most common informal settings. *Most common aspects of daily life.*	May be difficult to understand, even for speakers accustomed to dealing with non-natve speakers.	Individual words and phrases

OPI Major Levels (1/4)

Novice:

- **Tasks/Functions:** Communicate minimally with formulaic and rote utterances, lists, and phrases

- **Context/Content:** Most common informal settings. *Most common aspects of daily life.*

- **Accuracy:** May be difficult to understand, even for speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.

- **Text Type**: individual words and phrases

OPI Major Levels (2/4)

Intermediate:

- **Tasks/Functions:** Create with language, ask and answer simple questions, and handle a simple situation or transaction.

- **Context/Content:** Some informal settings and a limited number of transactional situations/ *Predictable, familiar topics related to daily activities and personal environment*

- **Accuracy:** Can be understood, with some repetition, by speakers accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers.

- **Text Type**: Discrete sentences and strings of sentences

OPI Major Levels (3/4)

Advanced:

- **Tasks/Functions:** Narrate and describe in all major time frames and deal effectively with an unanticipated complication in a routine situation and transaction.

- **Context/Content:** Most informal and some formal settings/ *Topics of personal and general current interest*

- **Accuracy:** Can be understood without difficulty by speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-native speakers

- **Text Type**: Oral paragraphs/ Connected discourse

OPI Major Levels (4/4)

Superior:

- **Tasks/Functions:** Discuss familiar and unf[amiliar] topics concrete and abstractly, support opini[ons,] hypothesize.

- **Context/Content:** Most informal and formal settings/ *Wide range of public-interest topics and some special fields of interests and expertise*

- **Accuracy:** No pattern of error in basic structures. Errors virtually never interfere with communication or distract the interlocutor from the message.

- **Text Type**: Extended discourse
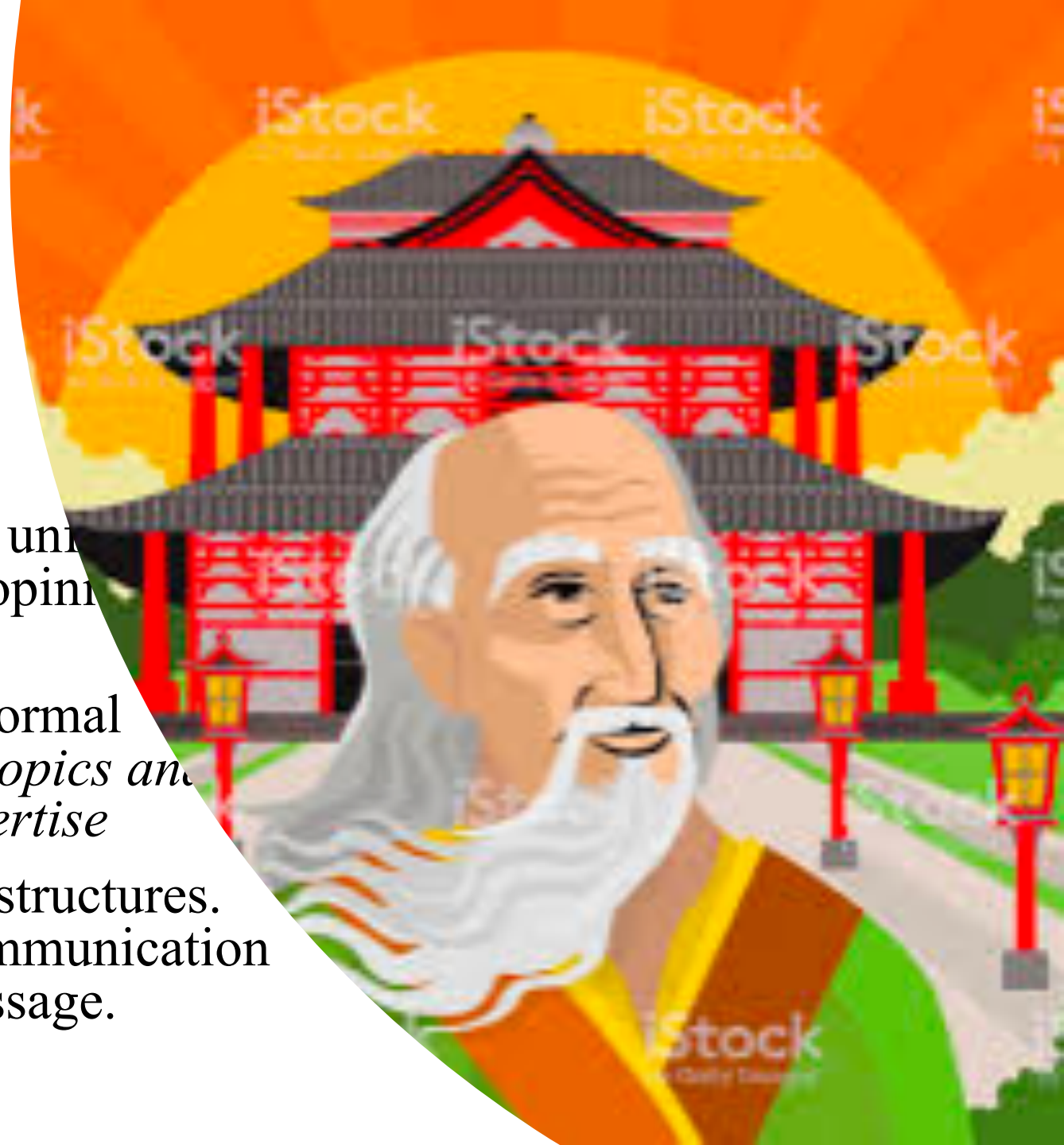
Start developing functions *at the next higher level* in teaching!
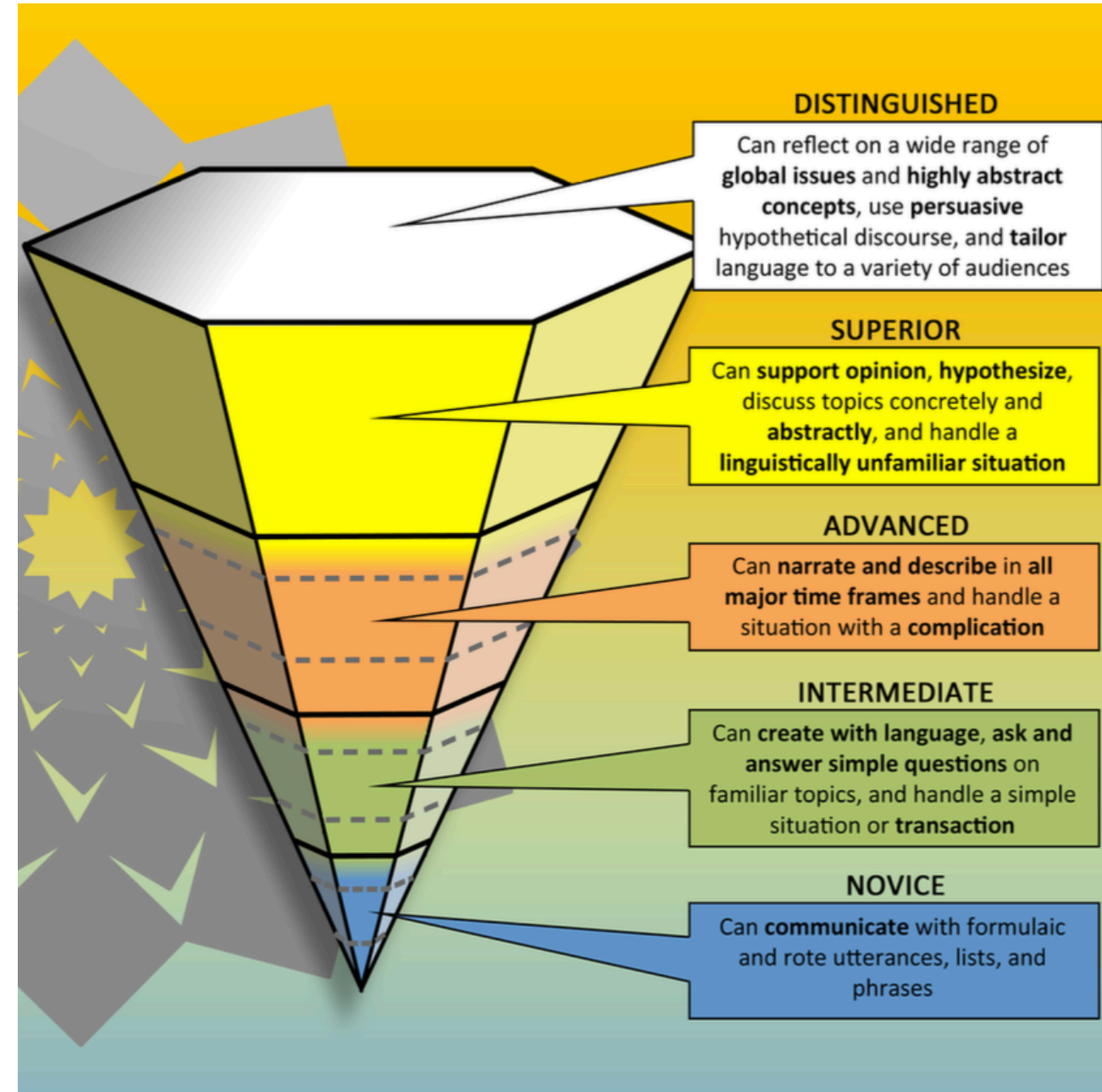
How about *writing* ?

WPT

NOVICE LEVEL

Test forms addressing lower levels of proficiency will include Novice level questions. These prompts will provide a context in which you might have to create a list of words.

Types of Questions and/or Requests	Examples of Novice-Level Questions and/or Requests
Lists	What colors do you want to paint your house? Make a list of the rooms in the house and the colors you want to use in each room.
Phrases	In preparation for your friend's party, make a list of the activities you want to prepare.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

At the Intermediate level, writers can write about their routines and personal interests. Questions will invite you to write with sentence-level discourse.

Types of Questions and/or Requests	Examples of Intermediate-Level Questions and/or Requests
Simple description of a person, place or thing	Write a note to your parents in which you describe your best friend. What does he or she look like?
Simple description of an activity or event	Write an e-mail in which you tell a new friend about what you usually do at an American picnic.
Ask questions to get something you want or need	Write a letter to your host family to ask about their house and the family. Ask three or four questions to find out what you want to know.

ADVANCED LEVEL

Advanced-level questions invite you to write in detail about autobiographic topics and beyond. Writers will be asked to write about themselves and about their work, or community. Questions invite you to provide detail in paragraph-length discourse.

Types of Questions and/or Requests	Examples of Advanced-Level Questions and/or Requests
Detailed descriptions of people, places, and things from your present and your past	You are writing a report about your internship in a computer company. Write about the area where you worked at the company. Provide a detailed description of the office and the people who worked there.
Detailed stories about something that has happened, is happening, or will happen	You just arrived from a camping vacation. Write a story about an interesting situation that happened while camping. What started the situation and how was it finally resolved?
Handle a complication that arises in a transaction	You bought an item on the internet but, when the package arrived, the item was not what the description advertised. Write a note to customer service. Explain what happened and request a replacement.
Report on a current event	You are writing a report for the local newspaper about the impact of climate changes in local weather. Report on the recent weather changes in your area and what has happened most recently. Comment on the most recent news.

SUPERIOR LEVEL

Superior-level questions invite you to reflect thoughtfully about issues and problems in our society. These questions ask you to organize your ideas in a logical manner, which will require more complex elaboration in an essay-like discourse. The context of these questions is more formal and will invite you to deal with a problem or issue at the community, national or global level.

| Types of Questions and/or Requests	Examples of Superior-Level Questions and/or Requests
State and support an opinion	You have been invited to write a column for the local paper on the impact of air travel in our society. Write an essay about the most significant changes that aviation has produce for American society. In your opinion, what has been the most important contribution of air travel to contemporary American society? Explain why that contribution, and not others, is the most important.
Hypothesize about possible conditions and outcomes	Continue your essay commenting on air travel changes that could be adopted by airlines and airports to improve the travel experience. Suggest some changes and describe what impact these changes would have on the traveler if they were adopted.
Discuss topics in general, abstract terms	Your city is inviting proposals for collaboration between your university and the community. As president of the student union, you are writing a proposal to the community for a collaboration between the student community and the city governance. Provide a rationale for this collaboration. Explain why student organizations and local governance collaboration can be beneficial for the community and an educational opportunity for student leaders.

Re-designing writing to make it more communicative and more interesting!
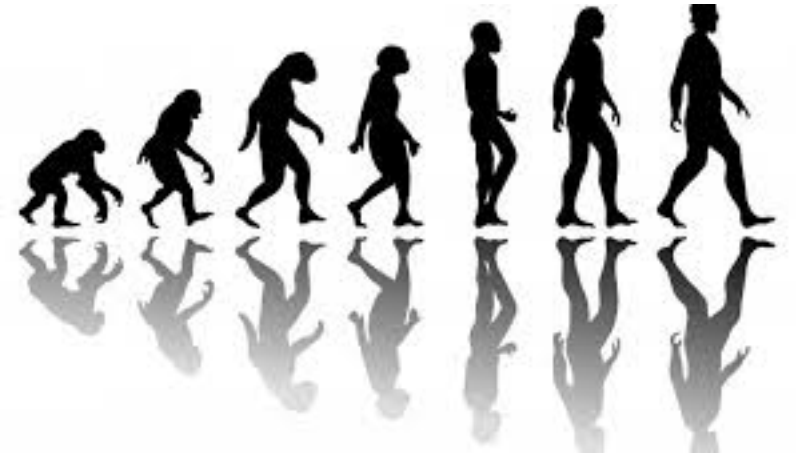
Try to make your assignment meaningful or authentic

- RAFT: Role, Audience, Format, Task

- TIP: Task as Intriguing Problems

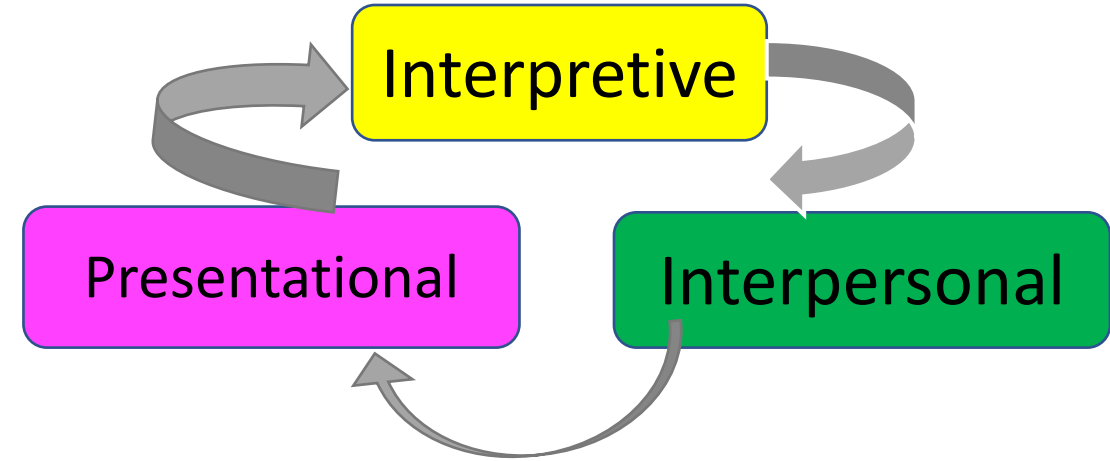- <u>Examples</u> (OPI, WPT implications)
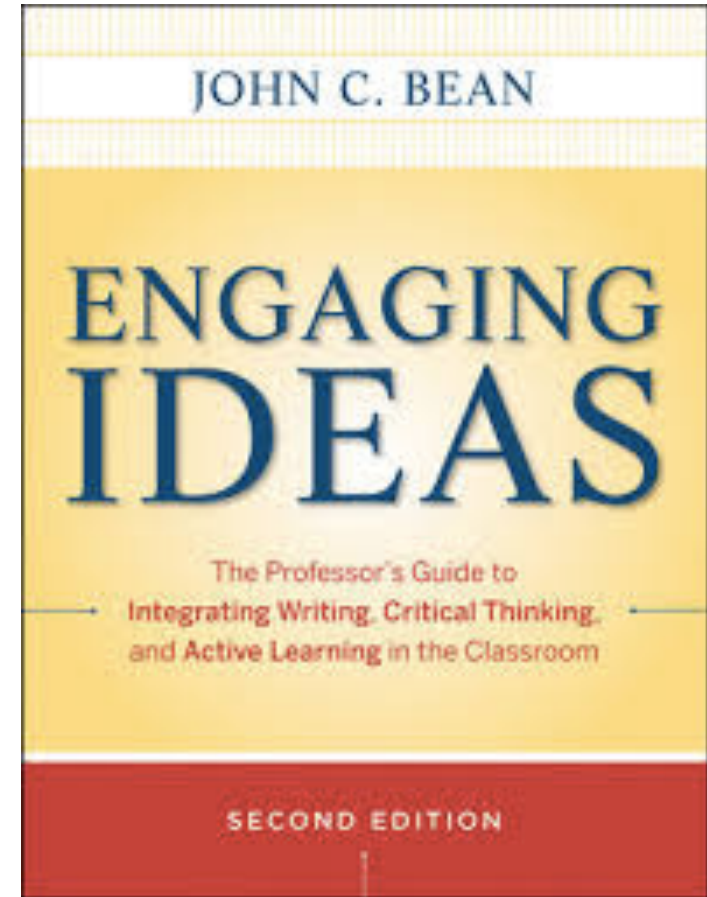
RAFT and TIPS

- RAFT: Role, Audience, Format, Task
- TIP: Task as Intriguing Problems
- Proficiency objective:
  - Intermediate High/ Advanced Low

- 我们需要坚持传统吗？
- 一次性产品和环境保护
- 徐力杀母是谁的错？
- 小心，大学里的作弊问题——给教务长的一封信
- 工作面试准备

AAPPL

For K-12 students, much cheaper! ($20)

- Interpretive listening

- Interpretive reading

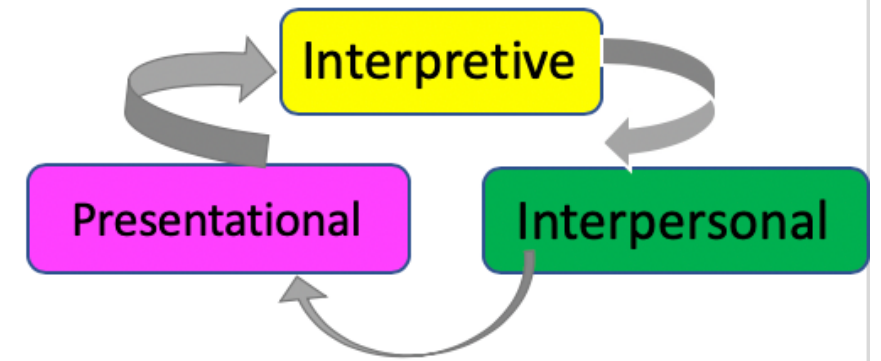- Interpersonal listening and speaking

- Presentational writing

https://www.languagetesting.com/aappl2-demo

AP Chinese

https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-chinese-language-and-culture/exam

- Multiple Choice
  - Listening
  - Reading
- Free responses
  - Writing
  - Speaking

Sounds like we are teaching to tests?

Not if the tests are **_well-designed_** and help achieve our **_pedagogical objectives_**!

The washback effects of tests on instruction

- What is washback?
  - Washback: the influence testing has on the learning environment (e.g., instruction, curricular materials, student perceptions of learning, student performance).
- How to link performance tests with classroom instruction?
  - Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)
  - Interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational tasks

IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Implementing Integrated Performance Assessment

By: Bonnie Adair-Hauck, Eileen W. Glisan, and Francis J. Troyan

Publisher: ACTFL

Print member price: $25.95   eBook member price: $10.95
Print non-member price: $29.95   eBook non-member price: $12.95

A follow-up to the *ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment Manual* published in 2003. This book provides readers with expanded guidelines for how to design IPA tasks to inform the backward design of a unit. Suggestions on how to provide effective feedback and how to improve learner performance are shared. Also included is a re-conceptualized rubric for the interpretive mode and the addition of IPA rubrics for Advanced-level language performance.
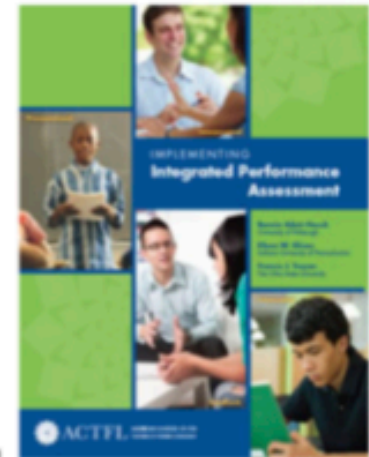
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Assessment of Second Language

Virtual Assessment Center
Why Assess?
What am I Assessing?
The Modes of Communication
Create an Assessment Unit Step-by-Step
Backward Design
Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)
Step-by-Step
1. Review Standards

Create a Standards-Based Integrated Performance Assessment Unit Step-by-Step

## Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA)

ACTFL has developed a prototype for assessing the progress language students are making in building their proficiency through the World-Readiness Standards. The Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) is a cluster assessment featuring three tasks, each of which reflects one of the three modes of communication-- Interpretive, Interpersonal and Presentational. The three tasks are aligned within a single theme or content area, reflecting the manner in which students naturally acquire and use the language in the real world or the classroom. Each task provides the information and elicits the linguistic interaction that is necessary for students to complete the subsequent task. IPAs are designed for students at the novice, intermediate, and advanced levels of proficiency. They are standards-based, performance-based, developmental in nature, integrative. IPAs are designed to be used with scoring rubrics that rate performance in terms of whether the performance meets expectations, exceeds expectations, or does not meet expectations for the task.

Design of the model IPAs, development of the rubrics, and research on test feasibility, reliability, and validity

1. INTERPRETIVE TASKS

Interpretive

Presentational   Interpersonal

Examples of interpretive tasks:

- Listening to radio commercials
- Listening to a podcast
- Reading a magazine or newspaper article
- Reading a letter
- Reading a short story
- Viewing a film or video segment
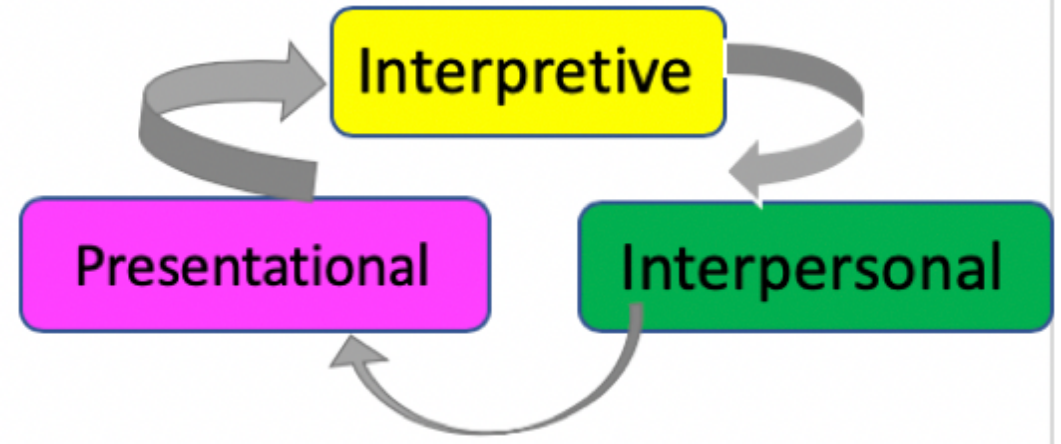
INTERPRETIVE TASKS

Comprehension Guide Analysis:
Performance Expectations

- Literal comprehension
  a. Key word recognition
  b. Main idea detection
  c. Supporting detail detection

- Interpretive comprehension
  a. Organizational features
  b. Guessing meaning from context
  c. Inferences
  d. Author's perspective
  e. Cultural perspectives

2. INTERPERSONAL TASKS

Two-way, interactive situations:

- Face-to-face conversation
- Phone conversation
- Text messaging
- Exchange opinions, feelings and emotions
- Provide and obtain information
- Spontaneous, without notes
- Active negotiation of meaning

3. PRESENTATIONAL TASKS

Interpretive

Presentational

Interpersonal
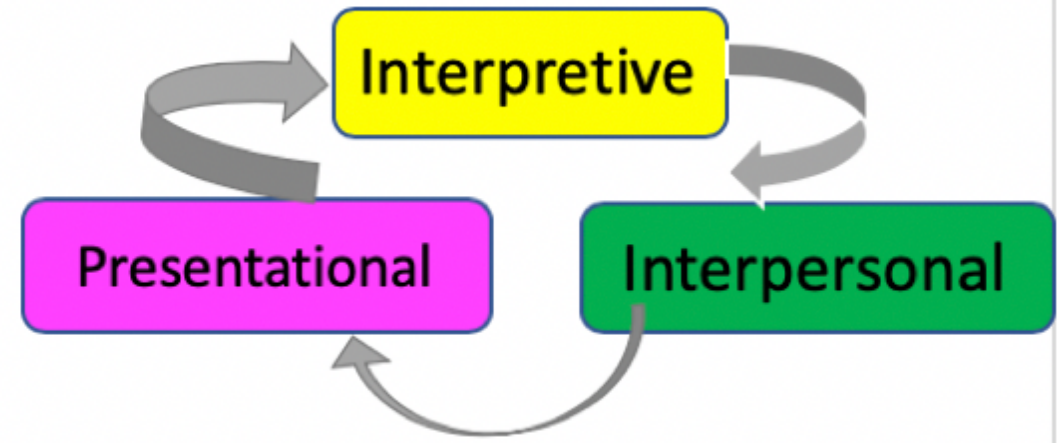
- Formal speaking or writing activities
- Produce a one-way communication to an audience of readers or listeners
- Based on the topic and information obtained in the previous two tasks
- Authentic, real world situations
- Audience includes someone other than the teacher
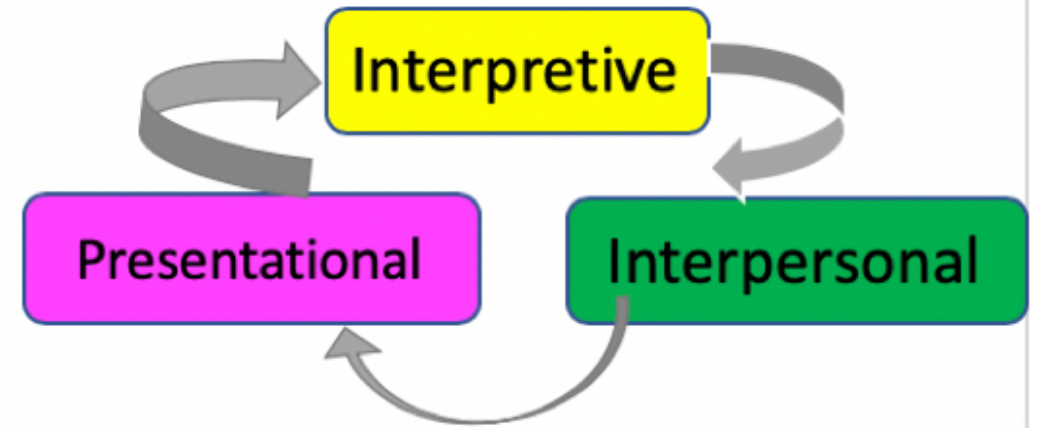
Speech   Report
Podcast   Paper
Video   Story
Newscast   Letter

IPA Example

- Google drive example

- Textbook

- Different Levels
  - Final project (summative assessment)
  - Daily class (formative assessment—URI example)

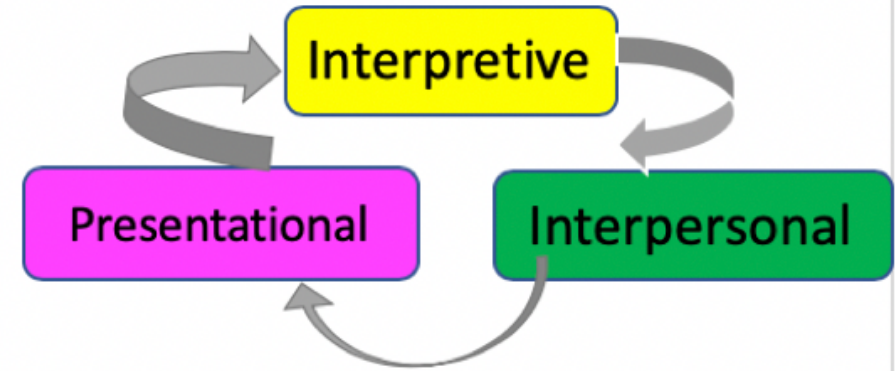- Reality Check! (mini IPA and culminative IPA?)

Table 6. Unit Level Performance Assessments
What makes the right travel destination for me?

Level	Interpretive	Presentational	Interpersonal
Novice Where would I like to travel?	Listen to a travelogue: match photos to each description heard.	Write a brief website description for five places of interest (where, hours open, admission, etc.).	In pairs, look at five photos and discuss likes and dislikes, deciding which two places to visit on your last day in the target country.
Intermediate	**Interpretive**	**Presentational**	**Interpersonal**
Why would I choose a particular destination?	Using Internet resources, fill in requested information about the area you have selected to visit in the target country.	Create a commercial and a flyer to promote the region you have selected.	Discuss with a partner the places in classmates' commercials, deciding which will be the most exciting to visit and how you will convince the rest of your class.
Intermediate High	**Interpretive**	**Interpersonal**	**Presentational**
How could travel help my career options?	Investigate places for study, travel, or work in the target country; identify how they would be helpful to four careers you are exploring.	Evaluate with a partner the career advantages you could gain by studying, traveling, or working in the target country.	Write a letter to apply for an intern- ship, explaining how the experienc will fit into your career plans, and how you have prepared for it.
Advanced	**Interpersonal**	**Presentational**	**Interpretive**
How does travel change the way I look at the world?	Discuss stereotypes of the target culture that you know you see differ- ently now; identify ideas you want to investigate while in the target country.	Write a newspaper editorial explain- ing one U.S. cultural phenomenon that is likely to be misinterpreted by tourists from the target country.	Read a work of literature with a strong sense of place; describe th cultural influences shaping the m idea or conflict.

Template

Quick Summary
(Adapted from Clementi & Terrill, 2013, pp. 100-101)

Reproduce this template to develop future performance assessment tasks for your units of instruction.

What Is the Target for Performance?

Theme/Topic *Think about the unit you are planning: What is the engaging thematic focus?*	

What are the assessment targets for interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational communication? Do these assessments engage and motivate your students?

Summative Performance Assessment • *These tasks allow learners to demonstrate how well they have met the goals of the unit.* • *They are integrated throughout the unit.* • *The template encourages multiple interpretive tasks.*	Interpretive Mode		
	Presentational Mode		Interpersonal Mode

Knowledge Students Need to Be Successful on These Performance Assessments

Toolbox		
Language Functions	Related Structures/Patterns	Vocabulary Expansion

Activities to Prepare for These Performance Assessments

Key Learning Activities/Formative Assessments		
Key Learning Activity/ Formative Assessment *(representative samples from beginning to end of unit)*	How does this activity support the unit goals or performance tasks?	Mode of Communication

Final thought

Using technology to aid learning:

- Quizlet Live
- Kahoot: https://create.kahoot.it/share/language-assessment/5e931cd7-46a2-411c-85a1-4f4dc1869f75
- Wechat
- Fliggrid: https://flipgrid.com/

Creating rubrics:

https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/PerformanceDescriptorsLanguageLearners.pdf

Please join us at the NECLTA K-12 Wechat

and Facebook Group (open to K-16)
https://www.facebook.com/groups/2198721913728030/

- Thanks to my colleague Dr. LeAnne Spino for sharing some slides.

Thank you! Questions?

yu_wu@uri.edu