

Designing Intermediate Speaking Tasks

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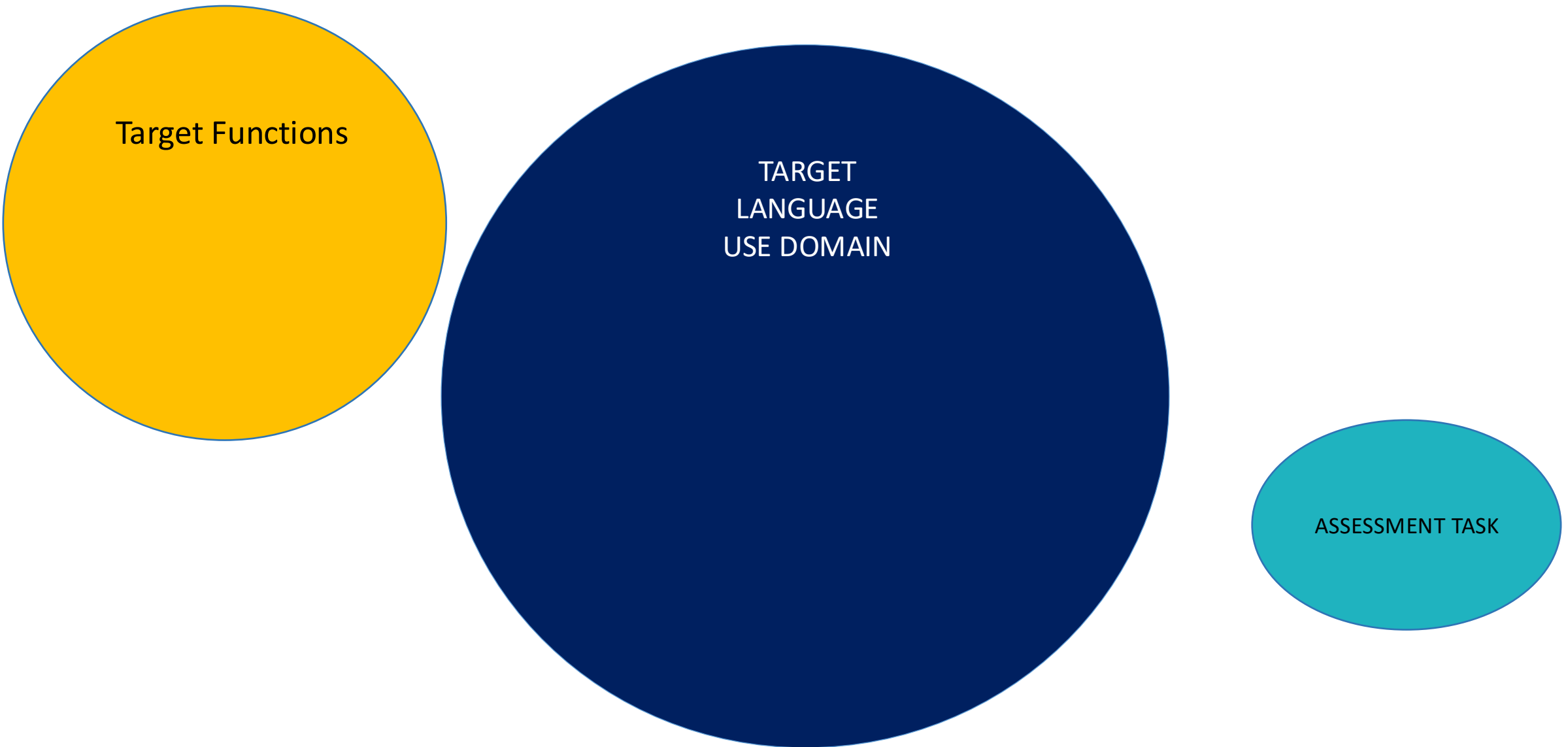


The Key Goal in Assessment

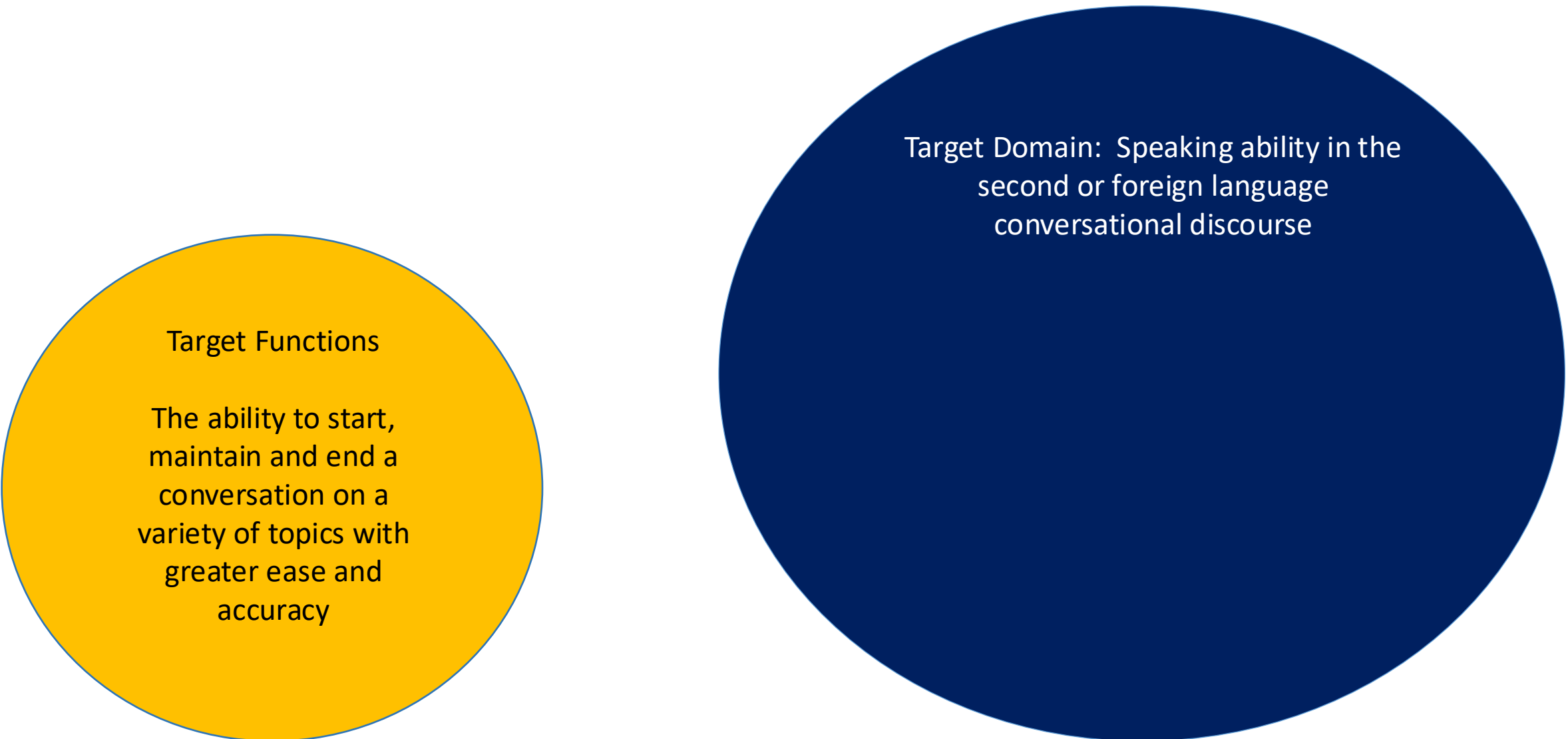
In testing or assessing one's language ability or performance, the key goal is to provide an accurate and valid interpretation of a person's language skills in the real-life context for which the test is developed (Dursun, 2019).



Designing Useful Assessment Tasks



Assessment Task & Level	Evaluation Criteria	Performance Rating
INTERMEDIATE SPEAKING	Tasks/Functions: Create with language when talking about familiar/daily life topics. Initiate, maintain, and bring to close a simple conversation by asking and responding to simple questions. Ask simple questions and handle straightforward survival situation (during the role-play). Text Type: Produce discrete sentence-level language/ Strings of discrete and complete sentences and questions (during the role play). Content: Informal /personal life settings and a limited number of transactional situation. Context: Satisfy simple personal needs and social (transactional) demands to survive in the target language culture. Accuracy: Understood with some repetition by the “sympathetic” listener. First-language influence on syntax and grammar is acceptable.	Novice High: • Task/Functions: Performs intermediate tasks, but not consistently. Some tasks may be incomplete. • Text Type: Produces strings of very simple sentences in response to some prompts, may only produce lists or phrases in response to others. • Content: Lack of vocabulary limits ability to respond to some topics, even within daily life. • Context: Can ask some questions, but cannot successfully get through a transaction. • Accuracy: Frequent errors can cause misunderstandings and ability to communicate clearly.
		Intermediate Low: • Task/Functions: Performs intermediate tasks minimally. • Text Type: Produces strings of simple sentences. Most sentences are disconnected. • Content: Can converse about a limited number of personal topics. May often lack necessary vocabulary. • Context: Can get through a simple transaction with some difficulty. May need some prompting. • Accuracy: Frequent errors cause some misunderstandings, but generally comprehensible.
		Intermediate Mid: • Task/Functions: Performs intermediate tasks with ease and volume. • Text Type: Produces strings of sentences, some connected loosely. Produces some chunks of more organized language. • Content: Can converse about a variety of personal topics. Usually have necessary vocabulary. • Context: Can get through a simple transaction appropriately and successfully (i.e. the role play). • Accuracy: Understood by a sympathetic listener despite frequent errors.



Target Functions

The ability to start,
maintain and end a
conversation on a
variety of topics with
greater ease and
accuracy

Target Domain: Speaking ability in the
second or foreign language
conversational discourse

Assessment Task 1

Scenario

You attended a short meeting where the manager listed a few tasks for the team. A colleague asks you what happened.

Instructions

- Read the following lines out loud exactly as written:
- “Becky will contact the Associated Press.”
- “Alan will check the numbers.”
- “Kieran will send the notes.”

What can we infer about?

TARGET
LANGUAGE USE
DOMAIN

Assessment Task 2

Oral Proficiency Interview

An authentic, highly-structured one-on-one conversation lasting 5-10 minutes.

- Your goal is to elicit the test taker's best possible sample of functional speaking ability, rather than only accuracy and grammar.
- It will include a role play where the test taker and the language specialist act out a scenario that the test taker could encounter in a region where the language is spoken.

What can we infer about?

TARGET
LANGUAGE USE
DOMAIN

Proficiency-oriented performance-based assessment design

Design Matrix: A blue print

Target Skill & Level	Target Functions	Topics / Inputs	Assessment Task Types	Response Types	Evaluation Criteria	Notes
	Functions	Context Content	Tasks	Elicitation	Performance Accuracy Comprehensibility	

	Functions	Topics/Context	Assessment Task Types	Response Types	Evaluation Criteria	Notes
SPEAKING INTERMEDIATE	• Can recombine learned material in order to create with language and express personal meaning when talking about familiar/daily life topics (mostly in present time) • Can satisfy simple personal needs and social/transactional demands in order to survive in the target language culture • Can ask simple questions and handle a straightforward survival situation/transaction • Can initiate, maintain, and bring to close a simple conversation by asking and responding	Informal /personal life settings and a limited number of transactional situations: • Daily routine • Free time • Job/work • Family/friends • Living situation • Studies/interests • Travel	Sample questions for individual interviews: 1. Tell me about your living situation / a typical day/weekend/vacation . 2. What is your favorite place in the world? Why? 3. Tell me about your hometown. 4. Describe your eating habits. Ideas for role play (Use GRASPS to turn ideas into prompts.) 1. finding a roommate / apartment 2. making a purchase 3. calling the doctor 4. meeting a neighbor	• Strings of oral discrete sentence-level language • Strings of discrete and complete sentences and questions (during the role play)	• Largely comprehensible to the “sympathetic” listener • Can produce variety of content/topics appropriate to level • First-language influence on syntax and grammar is acceptable • Inconsistent awareness of register/formal language usage	• The use of language can be both transactional and interactional. • Prompts must elicit multiple sentences, not single sentences or lists of words or phrases. • At the NH and IL levels, sentences may be very simple and formulaic. • Intermediate-level speakers are understood by interlocutors who are accustomed to dealing with non-native speakers of the language.

Developing Performance-based Tasks Scenarios

- Proficiency-Oriented Performance Tasks¹:

- ✓ Present test takers with **a problem, key challenging situation**

A realistic situation/problem

- ✓ Push test takers to develop **a concrete product** or **performance** for an intended audience

To “do” the subject

- ✓ Set **evaluation criteria** and **performance standards**

Articulation of evaluation criteria

Checklist

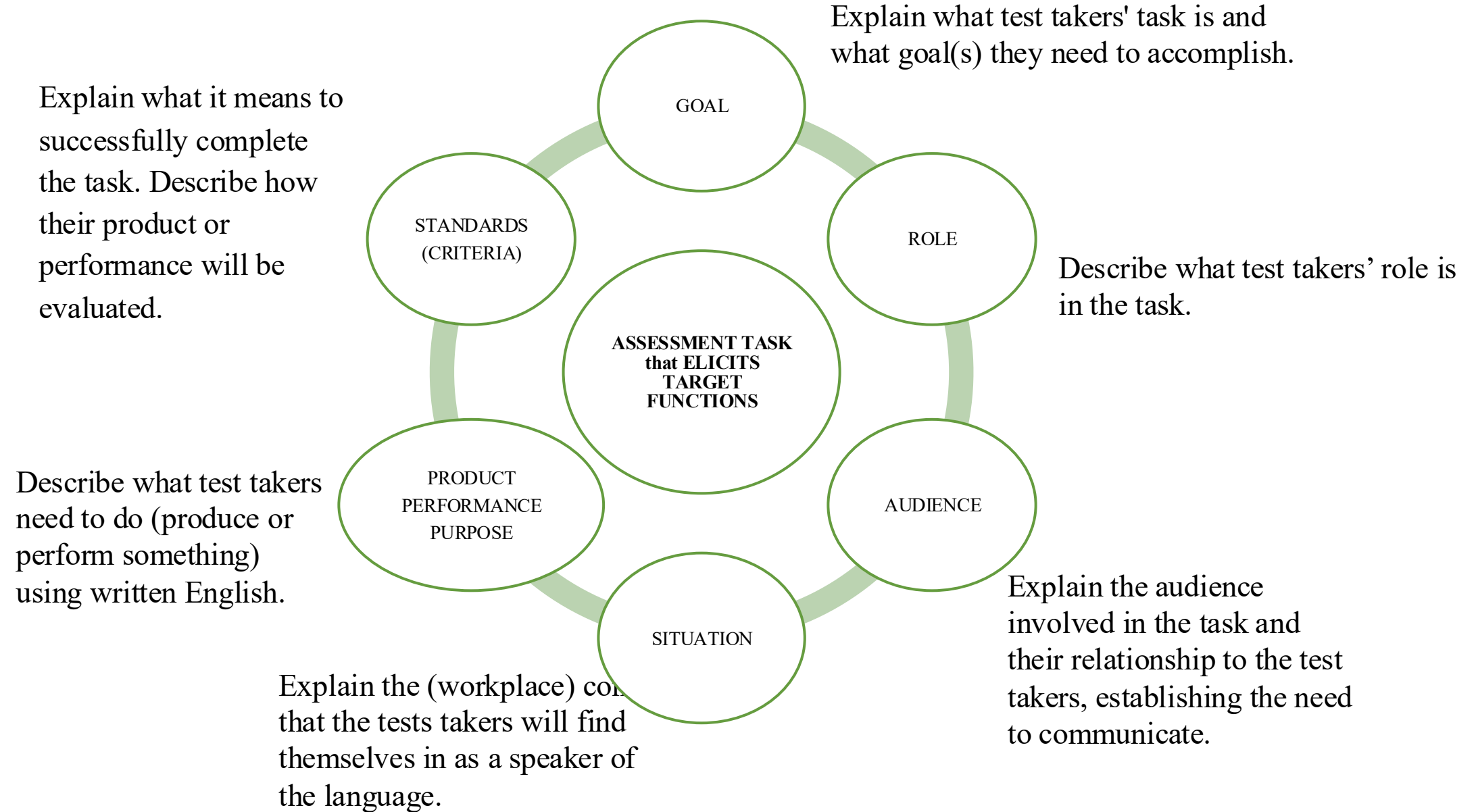
CONTEXTUALIZED
AUTHENTIC, RELEVANT

HOW TO PERFORM vs.
WHAT TO PERFORM

SENSE OF TASK COMPLETION

¹ Adapted from Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2008). *Understanding by Design Professional Development Workbook*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Task Development Framework: GRASPS Model



Let's design a role-play

ACTFL OPI Intermediate Role-Play:

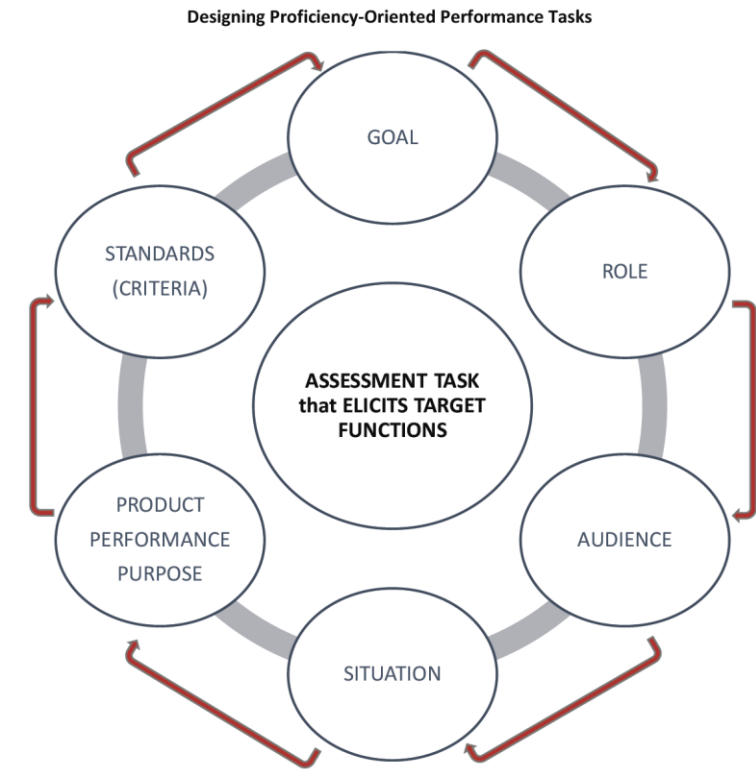
You want to rent an apartment. Talk to the building manager and describe what you want. Ask four or five questions to find out everything you need to know.

GRASPS Model Role Play

You are a student who is going to study abroad in X City for a year. You must find an apartment that meets your criteria. You have found a potential apartment and are meeting the building manager. You have concerns about the rent, roommates and the location, and you have a budget.

During the meeting:

- introduce yourself,
- ask several questions to find an apartment that meets your needs,
- and inform the manager of what you think/you would like to proceed.



Some Samples

You are studying abroad in **X City/Country**, and you want to organize a surprise birthday party for a friend.

You would like to get some help from your other friend, **X(Local name)**,. **Ask X several questions about throwing a surprise birthday party in X City/Country**, to make sure your party is culturally appropriate.

It is your first week in **X City/Country**, where you are studying abroad for a semester. You want to use the school's gymnasium but have not gotten a membership yet, and the information on the website is very confusing. You go to the front desk at the gym and **ask several questions to learn more about their membership programs and policies** for international students.

Develop **THREE** Intermediate Role-Plays

Remember the function of
the role-play in the OPI

Create your role-play
scenarios for various contexts

PERSONAL transactional

PERSONAL social

PERSONAL professional