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ALTAANZ Workshop: Language Assessment Literacy for Teachers (2)

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Session 2: Principles and situated practice of language assessment

- Real-life issues in language/s assessment
- Common techniques for assessing different dimensions of language learning and use
- Introduction to key principles in language assessment (e.g., validity, reliability, authenticity, practicality, fairness, and ethics)
- Reflections and a way forward

Teaching, learning and assessing in context



Teaching



Learning



Assessing



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Real-life issues

- Tensions related to public examination systems
- Alignment of assessment systems with external frameworks (e.g., Common European Framework of Reference)
- Socio-economic focus (e.g., migration and employment)
- Critical language testing

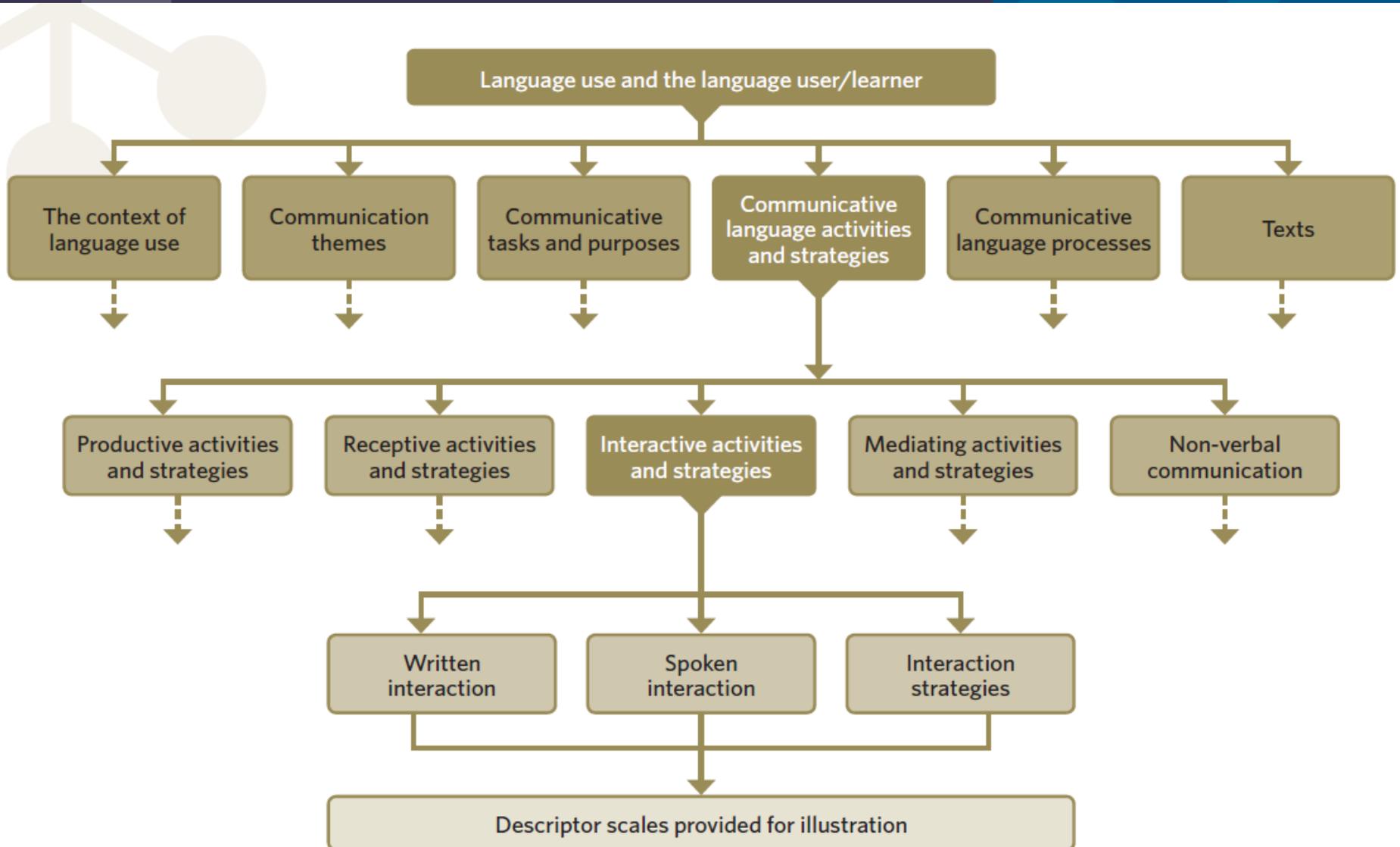


Common European Framework Reference (CEFR)

- *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR)*

C2	Mastery	} Proficient user
C1	Effective Operational Proficiency	
B2	Vantage	} Independent user
B1	Threshold	
A2	Waystage	} Basic user
A1	Breakthrough	

Components in CEFR descriptors



Use of CEFR

developing syllabuses

creating tests/exams

marking exams

evaluating language learning needs

designing courses

developing learning materials

describing language policies

continuous/self-assessment

teacher training programmes

Stages in assessment development

Thinking

Kind of test?
Purpose of test?
Constructs?
Constraints?
Washback?
Fairness/ethics
Budget?

Developing

Specifications?
Writing items?
Moderating?
Trial/pilot?
Analysis
Re-Trialling?

Implementing

Administering test?
Room/Proctors?
Scoring/marking?
Use of test scores?
Effects of test use?



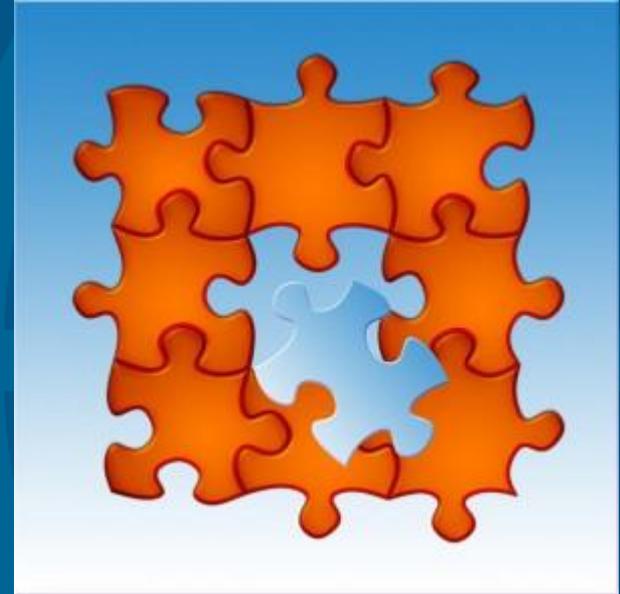
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Test specifications in brief

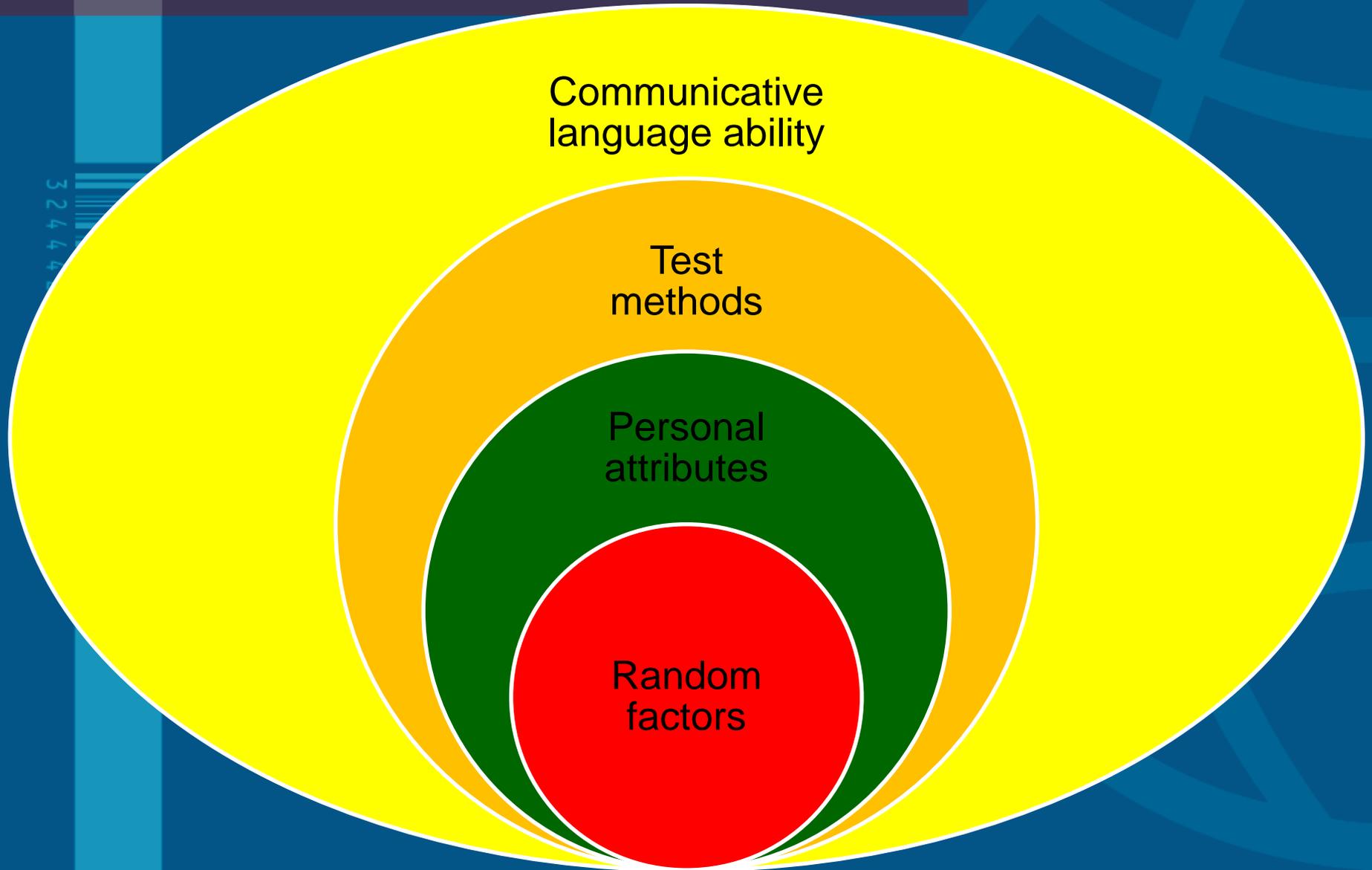
- Title
- Purpose and context of test use
- Test takers
- Abilities/skills being tested
- Format of test/assessment
- Nature of test task
- Test length
- Time allowance
- Methods for marking
- Scoring rubric (if relevant)

Common assessment techniques

- Multiple-choice
- Short answer
- Cloze
- Rational Cloze/Gap-filling
- Information transfer
- True/false
- Controlled, semi-controlled or free response formats
- Integrative tasks



Factor affecting performance



Ensuring authentic assessment

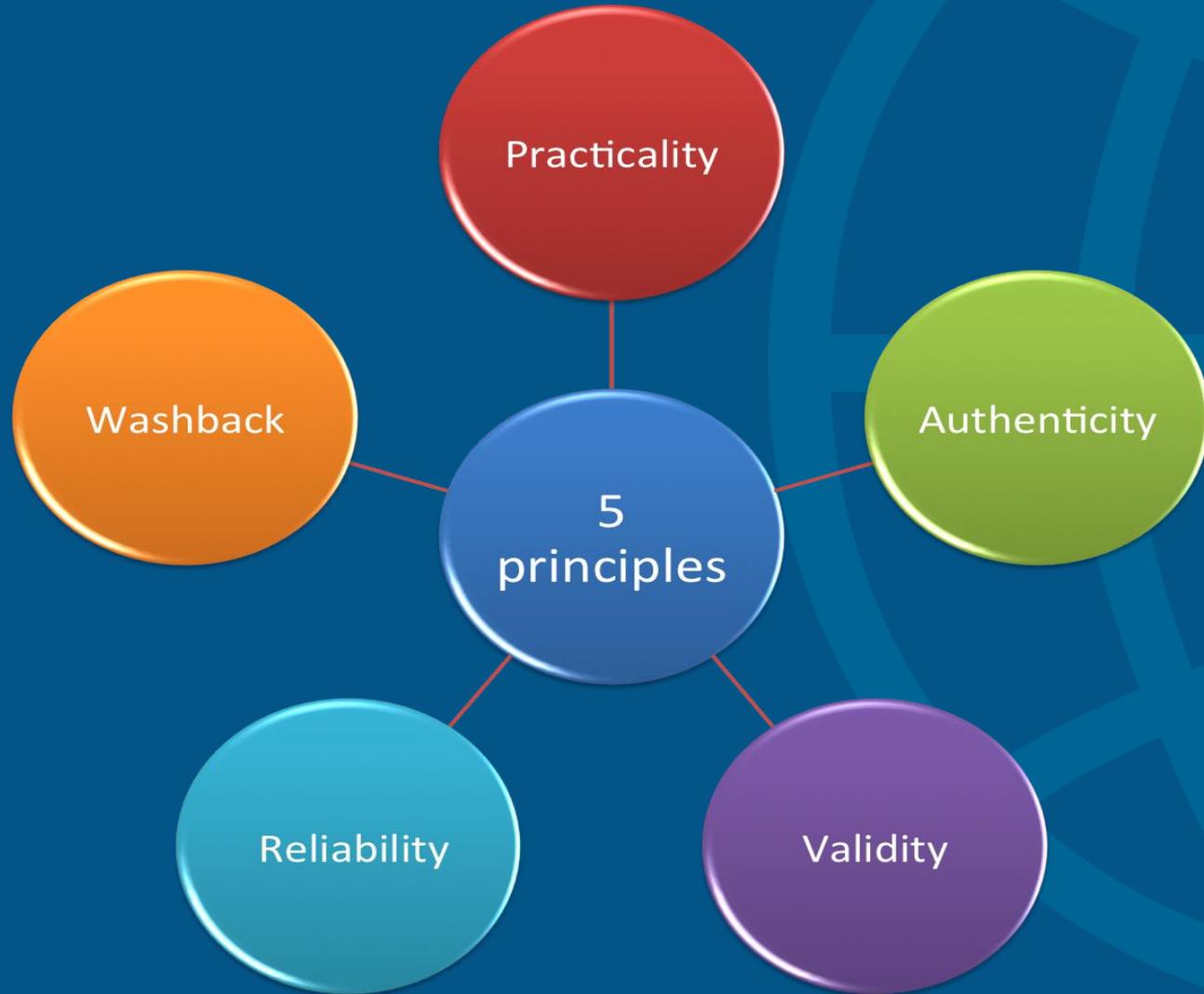
built around topics or issues of interest to the students

replicate real-world communication contexts and situations

involve multi-stage tasks and real problems that require creative use of language rather than simple repetition

require learners to produce a quality product or performance

Five Principles in language assessment



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Essential Considerations in Testing and Assessment

Authenticity:

- Real-life situations; genuine; useful; communicative functions

Validity:

The test/assessment fulfils its purpose.

The test/assessment gives you the information you want.

The test/assessment enables you to make well-founded decisions.



Essential Considerations in Testing and Assessment

Reliability:

- The test/assessment is precise enough for its purpose.
- The test/assessment produces scores of an individual consistently.
- The test/assessment discriminates between high, medium and low ability test-takers.

Practicality:

The test/assessment can be administered and scored in a reasonable amount of time and with reasonable use of resources.

Essential Considerations in Testing and Assessment

Fairness:

- Students/test takers know the purpose of the test/assessment.
- Students are treated fairly.
- Results are only used for decisions that they can reasonably inform.

Ethics:

- test fairness/equality
- consequential validity – impact of test use not only on individuals but also on society at large;
- Issues in misuse and abuse of assessment

Key considerations in assessment use

Tasks

Purpose

Test-takers

Time

Scores

Beyond
raw scores

Scoring
methods

Constraints

Nature of
interactions

Practicality

Validity and
reliability

Other topics of interest

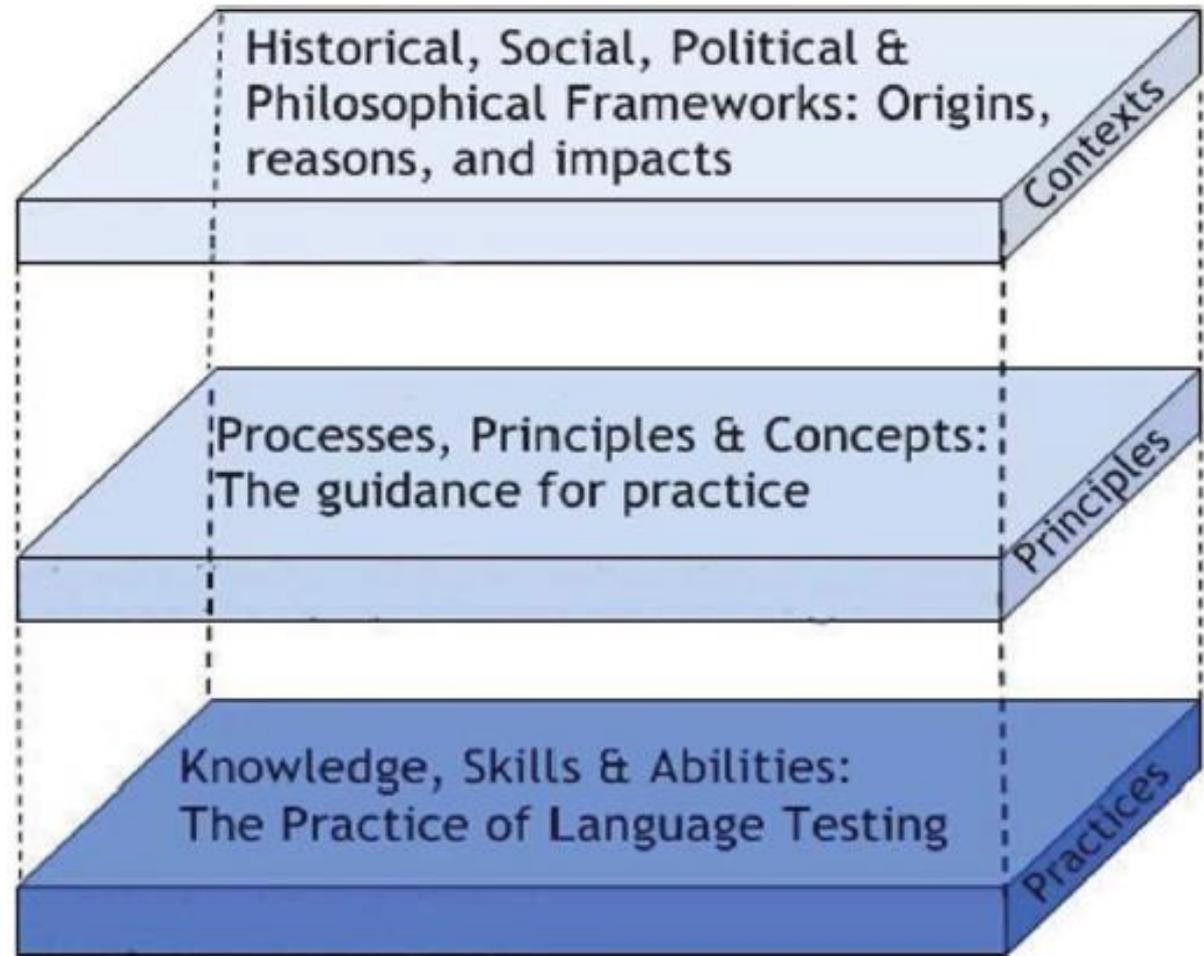
- Dynamic assessment
- Social dimension of language assessment
- Automated essay scoring and feedback
- Technology in language assessment

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Implications of language assessment literacy

- Positive washback
- Nature of assessment tasks and expectations
- Assessment criteria and how assessments will be marked
- Opportunity to reflect on assessment task completion
- Consider student diversity
- Performance feedback
- group feedback
- foster learning

Glenn Fulcher's (2012) Language assessment literacy: An expanded definition (p. 126)



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Conclusion

Language
Assessment
Literacy (LAL)

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graph TD; LAL[Language Assessment Literacy (LAL)] --- D[Declarative]; LAL --- P[Procedural]; LAL --- C[Conditional];
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Declarative

Procedural

Conditional

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Useful texts in language assessments

- Coombe, C., Davidson, P., O'Sullivan, B., & Stoyhoff, S. (Eds.) (2012). *The Cambridge guide to second language assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, H.D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. Pearson/Longman.
- Glen, F., & Davidson, F. (Eds) (2017). *The Routledge handbook of language testing*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Green, A. (2014). *Exploring language assessment and testing*. White Plains, NY: London: Routledge.

Can you read this out loud?

Tell yourself:

Everything
will work out.

Things will get better.

You are important.

You are worthy
of great things.

You are loveable.

The time is now.

This too, shall pass.

You can be who you
really are.

The best
is yet to come.

You are strong.

You can do this.

By Doe Zantamata
happinessinyourlife.com

We believe
what we tell
ourselves.

Questions, reflection and away forward

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