

# **Integrating language skills in teaching, learning, and assessment with scenarios**

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**2024 LTTC Seminar on English Language Teaching and Assessment**

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June 2024

# Approaches to teaching, learning, and assessment

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- **Grammar-translation**
  - 1950s onwards; one grammar-point at a time; L1 <-> L2 translations
- **Audio-lingual**
  - 1970s onwards; focus on oral skills
- **Communicative**
  - 1980s onwards; communication; authentic tasks
- **Learning-Oriented**
  - 2000 onwards; authentic situations; feedback to learners/test-takers

# Grammar-translation (1950 - )

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- **Grammar-translation approach for teaching, learning and assessment; in terms of curricula, textbooks, and assessments**
  - Discrete point teaching, learning and assessment
  - Focus on grammar and vocabulary
  - Focus on one skill at a time

# Audio-lingual (1970s - )

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- **Audio-lingual approach for teaching, learning and assessment; in terms of curricula, textbooks, and assessments**
  - Discrete point teaching, learning and assessment
  - Focus on grammar and vocabulary
  - Focus on one skill at a time
  - Adding some realistic curricula, textbooks and assessments

# Communicative language teaching 1980s - )

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- **Communicative approach for teaching, learning and assessment; in terms of curricula, textbooks, and assessments**
  - Some focus on grammar and vocabulary
  - Some focus on integration of skills
  - Adding some authentic curricula, textbooks and assessments

# Task-Based (1990s- )

## Types of tasks

- 1. Information gap activities: Students in pairs should ask and answer questions so as to learn each other's weekly schedule
- 2. Reasoning gap activities: Students can work on a timetable and on some variables and solve a problem.
- 3. Opinion gap activities: Students share their own opinions/feelings about a specific situation.

## Examples:

- Plan a trip – Students plan a trip after a conversation with other students.
- Problem-solving– Students brainstorm solutions to a certain school problem.
- Story making – Students are given the beginning of an unknown story and they brainstorm the story's ending on their own.

# Learning-Oriented Assessment (2000s- )

- From Purpura and Banerjee (2022):
- Overall: **A digitally-delivered assessment technique** that utilizes scenarios to provide TTs with a purposeful, real-life-like situation to achieve a goal.
- Purpose: to assess **TTs situated language proficiency** in the entire scenario—including the narrative, the simulated interaction, and the goal.
- Goal: **Contextualized** using a coherent set of tasks that are carefully sequenced.
- To achieve the scenario goal, TTs are required to **display a range of linguistic, topical, socio-cognitive, and other resources** within each task throughout the scenario narrative.

# Assessment for Learning (Black & Wiliam, 1985)

1. Should be part of effective **planning of teaching and learning**.
2. Should focus on how **students learn**
3. Should be recognized as **central to classroom practice**.
4. Should be regarded as a **key professional skill for teachers**.
5. Should take account of the importance of **learner motivation**
6. Should promote commitment to **learning goals**
7. Should ensure that learners receive **constructive guidance** about how to improve
8. Should offer learner capacity for **self-assessment**



# Carless (2007, 2015)

Three interconnected components:

- **Principle 1: Assessment tasks** should be designed to stimulate sound learning practices amongst students.
- **Principle 2: Assessment should involve students actively** in engaging with criteria, quality, their own and/or peers' performance.
- **Principle 3: Feedback should be timely and forward-looking** so as to support current and future student learning.

# Purposes of Scenario-Based Assessment

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- To give students **problem solving tasks**
- To present **relevant and reasonably realistic problems**
- To simulate a **social context** for problem solving
- To use **independent and integrative language skills**
- To use **technology** in assessment
- To model **good learning practice**

# SBA Core features

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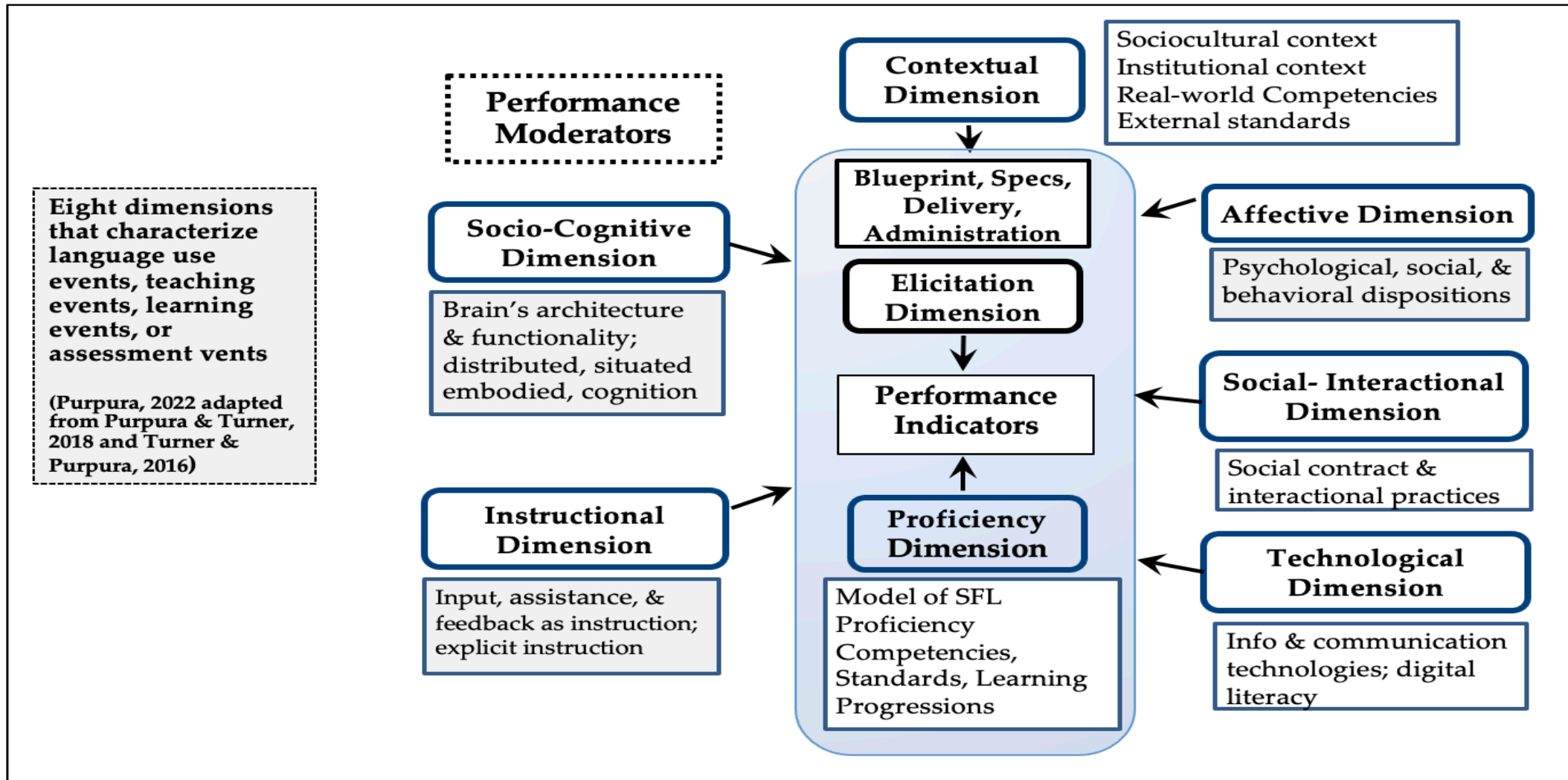
- Aligned with the **Communicative Language Teaching**
- **Natural context** in academic/professional settings
- **Meaningful activities**
- High on **authenticity** in assessment
- Foster **good language learning practice**
  - Focus on authentic situations
  - Focus on integrated skills (L + S; R + W; etc.)
  - Focus on task completion

# Examples: Integrative skills

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- **Source-based listening** for Speaking and/or Writing
  - Tasks: L + S
  - Tasks: L + W
  - Tasks: L + S + W
- **Source-based reading** for Writing and/or Speaking
  - Tasks: R + W
  - Tasks: R + S
  - Tasks: R + S + W

# Purpura's (2024) LOA framework



# Features of SBA 1: Dimensions (Purpura, 2022)

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## **1. Contextual** dimension

- Real-World competencies
- Organizational context
- Sociocultural context

## **2. Socio-Cognitive** dimension

- Architecture/Functionality

## **3. Instructional** dimension

- Assessment as Instruction

# Features of SBA 2: Dimensions

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## 4. **Affective** dimension

- Affective dispositions

## 5. **Social interactional** dimension

- Social contract/Interactional practices

## 6. **Elicitation** dimension

- Task operationalization

## 7. **Proficiency** dimension

- Content
- Proficiency levels

# Example scenario: “Getting to know”

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- **“Getting to know” series:**
  - Getting your visa [information texts + persuasive language]
  - Getting to know your program/university... [informational texts]
  - Getting to know your professors... [academic language]
  - Getting to know your classmates/friends... [social language]
  - Getting to know your city [informational texts]



# Example scenario: “Preparing to speak”

- “Preparing to speak” series [monologue]
- Listening to a 5 min talk [**listening** to persuasive talk]
- Drafting notes in ppt style of the talk [**writing** notes]
- Planning a rebuttal/disagreement with the speaker [**metadiscourse**]
- Drafting slides for speaking [**writing notes**]
- Speaking [**monologue** for 2 minutes]

# Illustrative Example from assessment

- Kunnan, A. J., Qin, C., & Zhao, C. (2021). Developing a scenario-based language assessment in an Asian university. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 19, 4, 368-393.

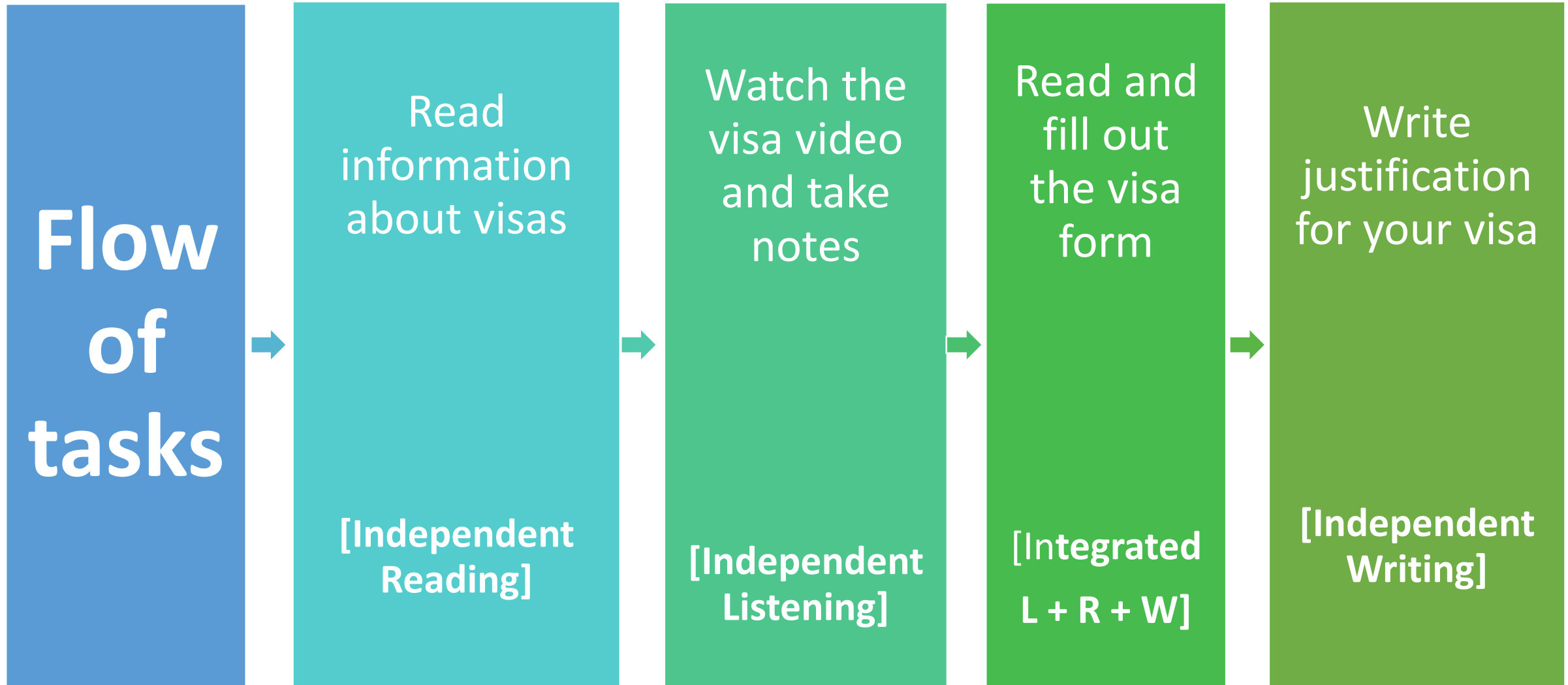
# Developing a scenario-based language assessment

A new computer-assisted test of academic English for use at an Asian University was commissioned by administrators. The test was designed to serve both placement and diagnostic purposes. The authors and their team conceptualized, developed, and administered a scenario-based assessment with an online delivery with independent and integrated language skills tasks. The project provided many advantages: (1) the test would be locally developed by university faculty and students who would have a good understanding of the test takers and the needs of the university, (2) the test would use topics, texts, and materials and technology that are socially and culturally appropriate and sensitive to the local context, and (3) the sustainability of the test would be higher as it were cost-effective in the long run in comparison to purchasing and renewing a license for an international test. This article documents the key considerations and processes in the development of this new scenario-based test of academic English that was conceptualized and designed by faculty and students collaboratively. It also discusses the challenges involved in the implementation of such a test, including resistance from local assessment culture and high workload of language teachers.

摘要 受一所亞洲大學委托, 本項目旨在開發一項全新的學術英語機考測試, 以務于英語課程分級和能力診斷。本文作者及團隊構思, 設計, 並開發了一款結合獨立及綜合語言技能任務的情景化在綫測試。該項目體現了衆多優勢, 包括

(1) 該測試由對本地考生和大學需求有深入瞭解的師生合作開發; (2) 該測試使用了社會文化層面恰當且符合當地語境的主題, 文本, 材料和技術; (3) 該測試具有更高的可持續性, 因為長遠而言, 它比購買和更新國際測試許可更具成本效益。本文記錄了師生合作設計開發這一新情景化學術英語考試的關鍵過程和注意事項。文章還討論了實施此類測試開發項目所面臨的挑戰, 包括來自當地既有測試文化的阻力以及語言教師現有工作量的提升。

# Scenario 1: Getting your visa (Kunnan, 2020)



# Reading: Visa information

**You need a visa to enter Australia to attend:**

University or college

High School, private elementary school

Seminary

Conservatory

Language training program

## Overview

Generally, a citizen of a foreign country who wishes to enter Australia must first obtain a visa, for temporary stay, or an immigrant visa for permanent residence.


You must

have a student visa to study in Australia. You must be admitted to a course of study at a college or university.

# LISTENING

## Directions:

Watch the video by clicking on the "Play video" button. You can only watch the video **ONCE**. You may need to **TAKE NOTES** for the tasks that come later.

Video	Note-taking box
<div data-bbox="211 368 1661 771"></div> <div data-bbox="211 771 417 801">Play video</div>	<div data-bbox="1717 361 2344 428">You may take notes here Your notes will NOT be scored</div> <div data-bbox="1717 428 2344 906">Note-taking area</div>

## Directions:

Based on the video, fill in the blanks with the correct answer.



1. The student needs to bring his passport and his university  letter.
2. The student also needs a photo with a  background.
3. The student could not complete the application process because he did not have a  of his passport.

# Reading and Writing

## Directions:

### Question 1-4

Start the application process now. Fill in the application form by clicking in the boxes below. Some boxes have already been checked for you.

Application No: 122	
	
<b>Visa Application Form</b>	
<b>Personal Particulars</b>	
Name: <u>Pedro Santos</u>	
Sex: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
Place of Birth (Country & Province/City): <u>Portugal</u>	
Contact Telephone No.: <u>309 558 7675</u>	
<b>Information of Visit</b>	
<b>1. Purpose of Visit</b>  <input type="radio"/> Family Visit <input type="radio"/> Employment <input type="radio"/> Business visit <input type="radio"/> Academic Exchange	<b>2. Type of Visa Proposed to Apply</b>  <input type="radio"/> Valid for 10 days within 3 months <input type="radio"/> Valid for 10 days within 6 months <input type="radio"/> Valid for 14 days within 3 months <input type="radio"/> Valid for 14 days within 6 months
<b>Documents you need to submit (click all that apply)</b>	
<b>3. Part I</b>  <input type="radio"/> Tax payment receipt <input type="radio"/> A copy of passport/travel document <input type="radio"/> Tour receipt <input type="radio"/> European identity card	<b>4. Part II</b>  <input type="radio"/> Employment certificate <input type="radio"/> Traveling schedule <input type="radio"/> University admission letter <input type="radio"/> Business invitation letter
<b>Urgent application (with extra fee)?</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Date(dd/mm/yy): 21/09/2018 Applicant's Signature: _____

# WRITING

## Directions:

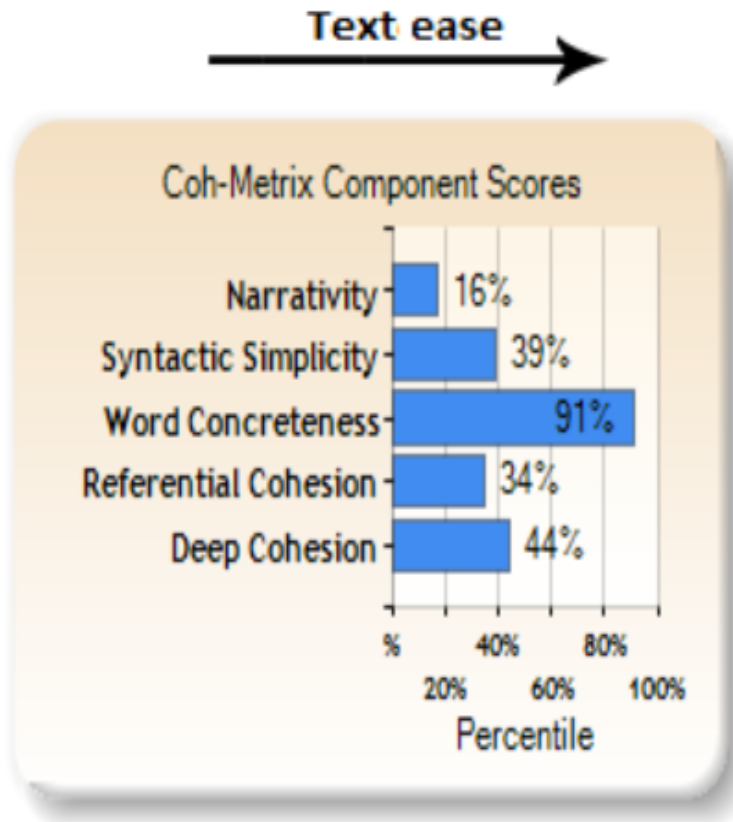
Apart from the application form you filled out earlier, you also need to write a short paragraph in about 50 words explaining three points: (1) the purpose of your visit; (2) your study plan during the exchange program; and (3) the benefits you expect to get from the program.



This is the end of Scenario One. Now click on the button "finish attempt" to submit your work. Then move on to the next scenario.



# Example: Coh-Metrix analysis



Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level: 11

-Your Estimated Grade Level: 10

## -Automated Analysis:

This text is low in narrativity which indicates that it is less story-like. Less story-like texts are usually more difficult to comprehend. It is average in syntactic simplicity. It has high word concreteness, suggesting a low volume of word abstractness and high imageability. Thus, it may be easier to understand. It has an average amount of referential cohesion. It has an average amount of deep cohesion.

# Test specifications

Scenarios/ Topics/ CEFR Level	Tasks	Skills <sup>1</sup>	Task description	Response Format	Items/ max. points	Coh- Metrix <sup>2</sup>	Flesh- Kincaid level	Lex Tutor <sup>3</sup>	Conversation Analysis	CEFR Level descriptors
1. Applying for a visa  A2	1	Ind. R	Read a notice calling for a visa application	MC	4/4	N=8%, SS=75%, WC=25% RC=2% DC=96%	8.9	K1=68.85% K2 =8.2% AWL=4.92%	N/A	Identify specific information in simpler written material
										Locate specific information in lists and identify the information
	2	Ind. L	Watch a video about a student applying for a visa	Short answer	3/3	N/A	N/A	K1=80.32% K2 =5.85% AWL=1.60%	Turns=10 Speed=123wp m	Understand expressions related to the topic
										Understand the main point in a simple conversation
	3	Int. R + L +W	Based on the notice and the video, write a paragraph	Constructed writing	1/10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Write a short (50 words), very simple personal letter giving reasons
2. Tourism  B1	1	Ind. R	Read an article and review the summary points	T/F (highlight the incorrect summary points)	8/4	N=6%, SS=52%, WC=58% RC=21% DC=18%	10.8	K1=73.41% K2 =9.83% AWL=7.23%	N/A	Understand the main ideas and details from longer texts Scan a longer text to gather information
	2	Int. R + L+ S	Watch a video about a professor giving an assignment	Constructed speaking	1/10	N/A	N/A	K1=83.12% K2 =3.9% AWL=6.49%	Turns=9 Speed=176 wpm	Briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions
3. Changing McDonald's French Fries Recipe  B2	1	Int. R + L+ S	Read an article and watch a video about three students discussing issues and summarize their ideas	Constructed speaking	1/12	N=47%, SS=53%, WC=77% RC=53% DC=35%	10.4			Use the language fluently and effectively on an academic topic; Identify the relationships between ideas.
	2	Int. R + L+ W	Based on the article and the video, write an essay on the topic	Constructed writing	1/32			K1=84.80% K2 =4.85% AWL=1.32%	Turns=31 Speed=146 wpm	Write an essay (200 words) that develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view

# Sample score report

Scenarios		Your skill-based score /Maximum Points		Your scenario- based score/ Maximum Points	% Correct
Scenario 1 <i>Applying for a Visa</i> (A2 Level)	Ind*. R#	<div><div>10</div></div>	10	26/29	<div><div></div><div>90%</div></div>
	Ind. L	<div><div>6</div></div>	9		
	Int. R + L+ W	<div><div>10</div></div>	10		
Scenario 2 <i>Tourism</i> (B1 Level)	Ind. R	<div><div>4</div></div>	16	17/29	<div><div></div><div>59%</div></div>
	Int. L + S	<div><div>13</div></div>	13		
Scenario 3 <i>French Fries Recipe</i> (B2 Level)	Int. R + L + S	<div><div>13</div></div>	18	42/50	<div><div></div><div>84%</div></div>
	Int. R + L + W	<div><div>29</div></div>	32		
Overall Maximum		108			100%
Overall Total Score: 85 (79%) CEFR Level: B2					

Ind\*.=independent task, Int.=integrated task

R#=Reading, S=Speaking, L=Listening, W=Writing

NA=No attempt

# Score interpretation

How to interpret your score	
Your proficiency level	How to improve on it
<p><b>Your score indicates that you can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand standard spoken language, live or broadcast on both familiar and unfamiliar topics normally encountered in personal, social, academic or vocational life.</li><li>• Read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. You have a broad active reading vocabulary but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms.</li><li>• Describe a straightforward situation on a variety of subjects, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.</li><li>• Write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.</li></ul>	<p><b>You can improve your skills by focusing on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When you are reading complex texts, look for the key information and ideas of each paragraph first, and use them to help you determine the central idea of the author.</li><li>• When reading complex texts, look for explicit statements of purpose; if you cannot find them, use close reading strategies, pay attention to word and phrase choice, emphasis and tone, to figure out the idea the authors intend to convey.</li><li>• When you are listening, think about if a particular part of the conversation or monologue illustrates the purpose as a whole. Such as a sentence or a key word can relate to or further a larger idea or provide a fact in support of it.</li></ul>

# Other tests that use SBA

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- **Occupational English Test** (for health professionals)
  - The Speaking section uses role plays somewhat similar to scenarios in SBA

# Questions to consider

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- How many scenarios do you need? 2, 4, 6...?
  - Depends on purpose of assessment and decision-making
  - Admission to courses, placement into courses, diagnostic feedback
- How to score assessments?
  - Holistic (overall), analytic (feature-based), task-based (completion)
  - Length of responses, linguistic and logical problems
- How to assemble test scores to build a proficiency profile for test takers?
  - Independent and integrative sub-scores
  - Overall score
- How to develop a list of useful scenarios?
  - Get views from test takers

# Where can SBA be used best?

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- In low-stakes contexts
- In classroom settings; in language learning centers
- In small classes; in pairs or small groups
- In collaborative performance activities
- In student-directed learning
- In formative assessment

# References

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Kunnan, A. J., Qin, C., & Zhao, C. (2021). Developing a scenario-based language assessment in an Asian university. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 19, 4, 368-393.

Purpura, J. (2022). Scenario-based language assessment: Empirical studies. Talk given at the *Duolingo Webinar Series*. June.

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# An introduction to SB language assessment

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**Thanks!**