Within a time frame, in some condition, the student will do something at some criterion level. (The schedule for determining achievement is every trimester, which correlates with the report card distribution in our district.)

A goal would look like this: By the annual review date, when given 10 opportunities in structured activities, the student will improve his/her expressive grammar skills with 80% accuracy.

Here is another way to view this:

- Time frame: By the annual review date
- In some condition: When given ten opportunities in a structured activity
- Will do something: The student will improve expressive grammar skills
- At some criterion level: With 80% accuracy
- Achievement Schedule: Every Trimester

The objectives that follow would be similar but more specific. Each goal page has three objectives. Here is an example:

- By a specific date, when given 10 opportunities in a structured activity, the student will produce interrogative reversals correctly with 80% accuracy.
- By a specific date, when given 10 opportunities in a structured activity, the student will produce the he and she pronouns correctly with 80% accuracy.
- By a specific date, when given 10 opportunities in a structured activity, the student will produce the auxiliary is and am + verb + ing forms correctly.

We explain to parents that we only write goals and objectives that we can measure, but of course we are working on many aspects of language simultaneously. Even though we didn't write a specific goal and objective for general vocabulary in this IEP doesn't mean that we aren't working on increasing vocabulary skills as well since language is a dynamic skill that is naturally used in a holistic sense. We also write this in the additional notes section of the IEP.

We don't usually write that we want the student to use these skills spontaneously in conversational speech, but of course, that is our ultimate goal. We just can't write every detail. If we included every detail, the IEP would be too long. There are some aspects of language that would take too much time or are too difficult to measure.
The State of Illinois also requires us to include the Illinois learning standard that correlates with each goal on the IEP. For example:

- Illinois State Standard 4A states: Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.
- Illinois State Standard 4B states: Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.

These are the two goals that we use most frequently with our IEP goals.