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Elizabeth Goulette
Georgia State University, egoulette@gsu.edu

Peter Swanson
Georgia State University, pswanson@gsu.edu

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Video Considerations for the World Language edTPA

Elizabeth Goulette
Georgia State University, USA

Pete Swanson
Georgia State University, USA

INTRODUCTION

For decades in the United States, teacher education has been both a political and social focus. As part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, Congress passed the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) in 1965 (P.L. 89-10). This six-part groundbreaking federal legislation placed an emphasis on equal access to education while setting high standards for academic performance and demanding accountability from schools and districts within a framework of six titles. Additionally, the ESEA funded primary and secondary school education, with the goal of decreasing the achievement gap. A year later, two amendments were proposed and passed: Title VI – Aid to Handicapped Children and Title VII – Bilingual Education Programs. At the turn of the new millennium, the landmark legislation was reauthorized by the George W. Bush administration and retitled as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB, U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

The unfunded mandate demanded even more rigorous testing and accountability of k-12 student learning and included foreign language as part of the core curriculum. While the legislation's philosophical merits (e.g., a highly effective teacher in every classroom) were difficult to dispute, researchers criticized NCLB because it narrowed the k-12 curriculum and prioritized reading, mathematics, and science instruction over non-tested content areas, such as foreign languages (Rosenbusch, 2005; Rosenbusch & Jensen, 2004). Additionally, teachers had to be considered *highly qualified*. That is, educators in public schools had to have: 1) a bachelor's degree, 2) full state certification or licensure, and 3) prove that they know each subject they teach (U. S. Department of Education, 2004).

When the legislation was reauthorized by the Obama Administration, the law demanded further scrutiny of schools and practitioners. *Race to the Top* required states to measure beginning and veteran teacher effectiveness in order to receive full federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Eager to secure federal funds, states began to pass legislation that centered on pre-service teacher preparation and certification standards, emphasizing teacher performance and effectiveness at the state level (e.g., Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2014; Illinois State Board of Education, 2012). As funding was awarded, states required to use student learning as evidence in teacher evaluation practices (Darling-Hammond, 2012), and in many states throughout the country, pre-service teacher candidates have to demonstrate "the results of classroom processes, such as impact on student learning" (Goe, Bell, & Little, 2008, p. 4), often through teacher performance assessments.

In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the law, now known as the *Every Student Succeeds*

Act (ESSA). Maintaining the rigor of its predecessors, the new legislation leaves the majority of the details regarding teacher education, qualifications, and certification procedures up to the states (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Aligned with the federal legislation, a new national teacher portfolio, edTPA, has been developed and pilot tested in a variety of states. However, while novel, this new externally-reviewed portfolio is problematic (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), especially in the area of assessment of learning. In this chapter, the authors present edTPA in the context of world languages and then discuss how the Integrated Performance Assessment can be used as teacher candidates develop their portfolios in order to successfully pass edTPA.

BACKGROUND

Over the past 60 years, educational legislation can be categorized into four distinct topics (Cochran-Smith, 2000): teacher attributes (early 1950s to late 1960s), teacher effectiveness (late 1960s through the mid-1980s), teacher knowledge (early 1980s and continuing through the 1990s), and teacher outcomes (2000 to present). Currently, as promoted by legislation, the goal for education in the US is improving student learning, and the measurement of teacher effectiveness is a critical component, which as Muijs (2006) noted, remains challenging.

Teacher Portfolio Assessment

For decades, pre-service teacher candidates' performance as novice educators has been measured via portfolio assessments. *The Teacher Work Sample*, developed by Renaissance Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality (2002), required teacher candidates to create an assessment plan, provide evidence of instructional decision making, use student learning to adjust their teaching, interpret student data, and communicate with

others about students' progress. A few years later, the *Performance Assessment for California Teachers* (PACT) was designed to measure the candidate's knowledge, skills and ability to teach and assess k-12 students (Sato, 2014). Grounded in the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards processes for veteran teachers, the PACT served as the basis for the development of edTPA (Sato, 2014.)

edTPA

Developed by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) at Stanford University, edTPA is a nationally-available performance assessment of novice educators' readiness to teach in 27 different content areas (SCALE, 2013). Working in conjunction with the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and administered by Pearson, edTPA can be administered across institutions and reliably scored by experts in teaching (Sato, 2014). Presently, edTPA is in various stages of implementation in 666 Educator Preparation Programs in 36 states and the District of Columbia participating in edTPA (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, 2016) in order to inform initial teacher licensure and certification decisions. For example, Hawaii is going to require a performance-based assessment such as edTPA for teaching candidates beginning in 2017, while Georgia and Illinois began requiring edTPA for certification purposes in September 2015.

Typically, portfolios such as edTPA are developed during a teacher candidate's final field placement, also known as student teaching. The edTPA focuses on three areas: (1) Planning for Instruction and Assessment, (2) Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning, and (3) Assessing Student Learning. World Language teacher candidate effectiveness is measured by thirteen 5-point Likert-scale rubrics. Thus, total scores range between 13 to 65 points. The 5-point scale describes teacher candidates' knowledge and skills

ranging from individuals who are not ready to teach to very well-qualified individuals who are ready to teach (SCALE, 2013). It is important to note that beginning teachers are not expected to be in the advanced range of the rubrics.

States are able to determine the levels to which teacher candidates must perform on edTPA and most teacher assessments. For example, a qualifying score of 29 for the World Language edTPA was set in Georgia for Fall 2015 enactment (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, GAPSC, 2015). In 2017, the required score in Georgia will increase to 32 for World Language teacher candidates (GAPSC, 2015). Other states have set cut scores as well: Washington (30), Illinois (31), and New York (35).

Research on the World Language edTPA shows that of the three tasks, teacher candidates "were most successful in the planning tasks and least successful in the assessment tasks" (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, p. 584). Such findings may be explained by what takes place in traditional world language teacher education programs. That is, teacher candidates have ample opportunities to plan for instruction and even teach lessons with students in k-12 schools when participating in field placements like practica and student teaching. With respect to practica placements, teacher candidates observe teachers of record for pedagogical, classroom management, and even assessment purposes. Nevertheless, the teacher candidates are not given access to student data. During their field placement, student teaching, teacher candidates have access to k-12 student data because they are in charge of the classroom typically, but it is during student teaching when teacher candidates develop their edTPA dossiers. Thus, prior to student teaching, teacher candidates do not have sufficient opportunities to collect and analyze data, which is required by edTPA. By the time they have access to student data, it is too late for them to learn how to analyze and write up their findings.

BEST PRACTICES IN WORLD LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

The teaching and learning of world languages has seen a paradigm shift in recent years. Once known as teaching the four skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in the target language, world language instruction and assessment is now conceptualized in the communicative language teaching approach that focuses on the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational (World-readiness Standards for Foreign Language Learning, 2015). Best practices in language teaching for proficiency in the target language places an emphasis on developing and demonstrating proficiency through performance-based assessments. Through such assessments, students can work individually or collaboratively, use their collection of skills and knowledge to create a response to a prompt (complex questions or situations) or a product that can have more than one correct response (Liskin-Gasparro, 1996, 1997; Wiggins, 1998). Performance-based assessments reflect the tasks and challenges language learners will face in real world scenarios.

Student Proficiency Assessment in the Target Language

The Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA) serves as an evaluation of student ability in the target language that is used as a cluster assessment featuring three tasks with one task in each of the three modes of communication (Adair-Hauck, Glisan, Koda, Swender, & Sandrock, 2006). The IPA is a multi-task assessment conceptualized within a single thematic context. A graphic representation of an IPA is presented in Figure 1. First, language learners complete an interpretive task (e.g., reading). Afterward they the information from in an interpersonal task (e.g., conversation) before they summarize their learning with a pre-

sentational task. In other words, language learners view, listen to, and/or read authentic texts in the target language, interact with learners in the target language in oral and written form, and then present in oral and written form to audiences of listeners and readers.

USING VIDEO AND VIDEO CONSIDERATIONS

Teacher Candidate Skills Using Video

Teacher candidates working on the edTPA possess a wide range of experiences using technology in the classroom. Some have never video recorded themselves teaching before whereas others have completed class assignments which required them to video record their teaching and reflect upon its effectiveness. While it may be an awkward process for students to watch themselves on camera,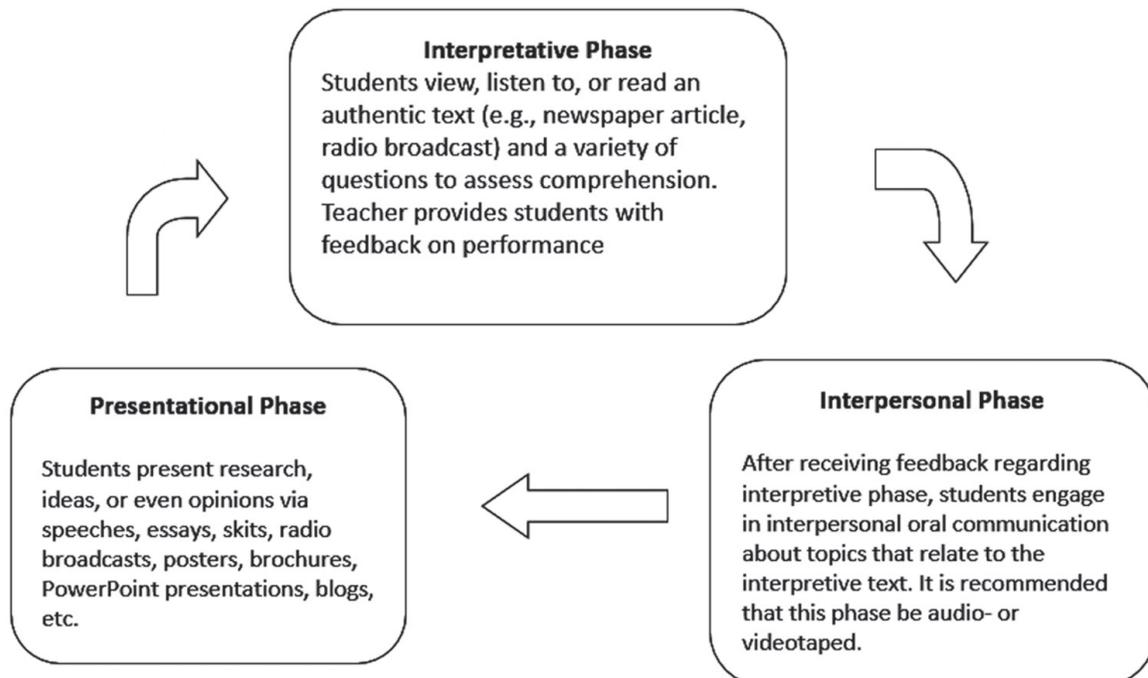 research supports using video recording as a powerful pedagogical tool to facilitate teacher candidates' self-reflection and growth (Baecher, McCormack, & Kung, 2014; Calandra, Brantley-Dias, Lee, & Fox, 2009; Danielowich & McCarthy, 2013; Tripp & Rich, 2012).

Teacher preparation programs also vary widely when it comes to the degree to which technology is incorporated into required coursework for pre-service teachers. Some teacher preparation programs mandate that their teacher candidates pass a dedicated technology course and other programs embed technology throughout the curriculum. Despite the wide continuum upon which these pre-service teachers fall regarding technology skills in the classroom, successful recording is essential for passing edTPA and cannot be avoided.

Securing Parental/Guardian Consent

An important prerequisite to the recording phase is garnering approval from parents/guardians of the students in the focal class that has been selected. Once teacher candidates have identified the focal

Figure 1.

Interpretative Phase
Students view, listen to, or read an authentic text (e.g., newspaper article, radio broadcast) and a variety of questions to assess comprehension. Teacher provides students with feedback on performance

Interpersonal Phase
After receiving feedback regarding interpretive phase, students engage in interpersonal oral communication about topics that relate to the interpretive text. It is recommended that this phase be audio- or videotaped.

Presentational Phase
Students present research, ideas, or even opinions via speeches, essays, skits, radio broadcasts, posters, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, blogs, etc.

class that they will record for edTPA, it is imperative that they immediately notify school administration, their k-12 cooperating teacher, students in the focal class, and their parents/guardians about the recording process and requirements. If school administrators and/or cooperating teachers refuse to allow a teacher candidate to record in their schools and/or classrooms, university supervisors will be required to assign new placements. A natural consequence of this type of logistical problem is that teacher preparation programs may begin to narrow the scope of schools that they place their student teachers in for their field experiences, based on prior consent for, and experience with video recording.

Many teacher preparation programs have developed their own video recording permission forms for teacher candidates' use on the edTPA. It is important to note, though, that while some schools require parents/guardians to sign a school specific consent form for video recording at the beginning of each school year, this form does not include recording for edTPA purposes. In the event that some parents/guardians do not consent to have their child video recorded for edTPA, the teacher candidate must avoid capturing these non-consenting students on camera. However, it is essential that all students, regardless of whether their parents have consented to the recording or not, receive the same quality instruction during the learning segment.

In order to provide all students with the highest quality instruction, while respecting non-consenting parents' wishes, teacher preparation programs often recommend that teacher candidates temporarily reconfigure the classroom into two distinct sections. In one section of the room the teacher candidate would place all of the students whose parents have provided recording consent. Those students for whom the teacher candidate has not been given recording permission should be placed in a different section of the classroom, which is outside of the camera's view. Tripods can be useful tools when student teachers face a situation where not all of their students have gotten parental consent to be recorded. At Georgia

State University, the foreign language education university supervisor recommends that teacher candidates use a tripod to position the camera at an angle that focuses on the consenting students. This way, the teacher candidate can walk about the room freely, and engage with all students, without fear of inadvertently capturing a non-consenting student on camera. In the unlikely case that a non-consenting student accidentally appears on the video, teacher candidates may blur out the image of the student's face.

Minimizing Teacher Candidate Anxiety

As one might imagine, teacher candidates are typically most anxious during the recording phase of the edTPA. There are myriad reasons why the video recording process and submission can be anxiety-provoking for these novice teachers. Students in the Georgia State University foreign language education program who recently completed the edTPA reported the following concerns about the recording phase: technological issues, such as ensuring that the camera's batteries are sufficient to record the entire class period; students' sensitivity to the camera, for example, students misbehaving to *show off* for the camera; the pressure to produce the best quality video of excellent teaching which is highly engaging to students; and factors outside of their control which could come to bear on the video recording process, such as fire drills or other interruptions that could negatively affect the instruction. While these potential issues cannot be completely mitigated, university supervisors and cooperating teachers in the k-12 schools can collaboratively assist teacher candidates by offering suggestions based on past experiences working with video cameras in the classroom for edTPA.

Vital Considerations for Video Recording

There are several common technical issues that teacher candidates deal with when working on the edTPA. Although the edTPA website offers

some resources to teacher candidates vis-à-vis the recording process, teacher candidates may not examine them carefully enough. At Georgia State University, foreign language teacher candidates are provided copies of important edTPA documents, such as the edTPA handbook, evidence chart, and video formatting guidelines. To underscore the importance of avoiding technical pitfalls, the university supervisor reiterates the technical elements in seminar sessions as well as reminder emails and individual conferences with teacher candidates during the entire edTPA process.

One of the most important pieces of advice for world language teacher candidates regarding edTPA is to practice with the recording equipment in advance of the official recording. Recording a lesson that is not part of the learning segment for edTPA can be valuable for many reasons. First, the teacher candidate will have an opportunity to face any discomfort or fears he/she may have with recording their teaching. The high stakes nature of the edTPA assessment and its consequences on teacher certification can be debilitating to some teacher candidates who only want to do their best. If teacher candidates are able to desensitize themselves (and their students) to the camera during the practice recording, everyone should be more comfortable during the official recording. Likewise, pre-service teachers may feel more at ease after having the opportunity to work with the camera equipment to ensure that the recording quality is sufficient. Teacher candidates can breathe a sigh of relief once they rehearse with the equipment and the audio is clear and the video shows student engagement and growth.

Teacher candidates should review both the mock recording and the official one to ensure that they meet all edTPA video requirements. Teacher candidates should select two short clips which highlight the best moments of their teaching during the learning segment (which is comprised of three to five connected days of instruction united by a central focus). These clips must be no more than fifteen minutes total and the two files combined must be less than 300 MB total in size (Pearson, 2014). The relatively small file size requirements

mean that recording in standard definition instead of high definition is recommended, if possible. If the recording device does not offer the option to record in standard definition, teacher candidates can reduce the resolution to either "320 x 240" or "640 x 480" as another avenue to meet the file size requirement (Pearson, 2014). As a last resort, large video files can be compressed to condense the file in order to satisfy edTPA's constraints but this is not preferable due to technical issues that could potentially occur during the compression process.

In addition to file size specifications, edTPA will only accept video files in the following formats: *.flv*, *.asf*, *.qt*, *.mov*, *.mpg*, *.mpeg*, *.avi*, *.wmv*, *.mp4*, and *.m4v* (Pearson, 2014). This stipulation is made to ensure that Pearson's portfolio reviewers will be able to access the teacher candidates' video files on their own computers. Consequently, at Georgia State University, the foreign language education university supervisor recommends that teacher candidates open their video files on at least three different computers to avoid a potential pitfall where the Pearson reviewer is unable to open a file on his/her computer. In the event that a Pearson reviewer is unable to open a file, the teacher candidate would receive a condition code for that task, and the entire portfolio would not be scored, requiring a resubmission.

Other technical considerations for video recording include various filming techniques. First, edTPA mandates that the clips be "continuous and unedited, with no interruption in events" (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity, 2015, p. 19). That is to say, the submitted video files cannot be spliced or edited in any way. No sophisticated features such as the title or even opening and closing credits are permitted (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity, 2015). For this reason, teacher candidates are advised to record each day of instruction during the learning segment so that they will have ample options to select from for the final video clips.

Secondly, the two video files must include interactions between the teacher candidate and students as well as student-to-student exchanges.

As a result, it can be advantageous for teacher candidates to use a tripod to record whole class interactions but enlist the assistance of a video operator (e.g. the cooperating teacher) to record small group work during the lesson. However, it is paramount that the video operator be well equipped to use the video recording device properly. Since the video clips must be continuous and unedited, the video operator must be cognizant of keeping the video running continuously. While it may be tempting for the video operator to start and stop the recording while moving throughout the classroom, this will cause problems when it comes to selecting a continuous clip.

Likewise, video operators must be mindful of placing a video camera's microphone close enough to capture small group interaction clearly without also recording background noise that could interfere with audio quality. On the world language edTPA, teacher candidates must submit video clips that showcase their students using the language interpersonally, often in small group or paired activities. Strategic placement of the video recording device during these small group exercises is critical to ensure that the focal students can be heard clearly using the target language. If the video clips capture too much background noise, or if the videorecorder is placed too far away from the focal students, it will be nearly impossible to distinguish their speech. When teacher candidates have the opportunity to practice with the video recording device in advance, they then have a better idea of how to strategically place the device and move it around to capture optimal sound quality during the recording phase of the official submission.

Peer Review to Avoid Condition Codes

It is important for university supervisors and k-12 cooperating teachers to assist teacher candidates, particularly with the video recording process, to avoid a costly mistake such as a condition code which would render the entire portfolio unable to be scored, requiring resubmission. Therefore, at Georgia State University, a peer review assignment is a mandatory component before final submission. During the peer review phase, teacher candidates open their assigned classmate's files and check that all files open properly and comply with edTPA's requirements. While the peer reviewers are not able to offer suggestions on the content of their classmate's portfolio, they are allowed to check for technical issues, such as a corrupt file or a file that is formatted incorrectly. Moreover, reviewing their classmate's portfolio may cause them to notice that a document is missing or formatted incorrectly in their own portfolio. The peer review process happens during the last weekend before official submission, so that each teacher candidate has a few days to review their peer's feedback and make any last-minute changes to improve their own portfolio.

All of these video recording strategies are crucial components for teacher candidates' success on the world language edTPA. The stakes are so high for edTPA that receiving a condition code for even one video means the teacher candidate will be required to resubmit one or more of the tasks at an additional cost. Beyond the financial toll, the resubmission process itself can be time consuming, depending upon how many tasks need to be redone. Official scoring reports often take three to four weeks to receive, which could potentially create timing issues for program completion and state certification. As a result, Georgia State University world language teacher candidates are required to submit their official edTPA portfolio by week ten to account for the extra time that could be needed to resubmit in order to receive a passing score by the end of the semester. Without achieving the state determined qualifying score on the edTPA, teacher candidates cannot be recommended for teacher certification, and therefore, may be held back from becoming employed by a school district.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

edTPA is a relatively new teacher performance assessment on the US educational landscape and there is much to learn about it. At this moment, there is a dearth of research on the World Language edTPA (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, 2016). It would be informative to learn more about how world language teacher education programs have been restructured since edTPA was approved for licensure decisions in so many states. Additionally, more empirical evidence is needed for multiple reasons ranging from programmatic improvement decisions to helping teacher candidates prepare quality dossiers. It would also be helpful to know more about how teacher education programs provide remediation to teacher candidates who are initially unable to pass one or more sections of the edTPA. At the moment, only quantitative research methods have been used to examine teacher candidate performance on the World Language edTPA. Qualitative and mixed methods research designs would provide important insight into this new high-stakes and costly assessment at a time when testing costs to become a teacher are approximately $1000 in Georgia (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Since the mid-1960s, the ESEA legislation has been an integral part of US curriculum and instruction. As noted earlier, the law focused on not only equal access to education but also setting high standards for academic performance while demanding accountability from schools and school districts. Every president since then has worked to reauthorize the legislation and arguably the most controversial reauthorization is known as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB, U.S. Department of Education, 2002). This mandate sought more rigorous testing and accountability of k-12 student learning and included foreign language as part of the core curriculum. Years later the Obama administration's initiative, *Race to the Top*, further scrutinized the educational process and mandated that states begin measure beginning and veteran teacher effectiveness to receive full federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Now, edTPA has been rolled out in more than half of the states and is a cause for concern, especially given that pre-service world language teacher candidates in many states have to successfully pass edTPA in order to receive teacher licensure (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2016). Thus, we strongly recommend that teacher preparation faculty members take the time to work with teacher candidates specifically on the aspects of video recording in the classroom. It is important to first gain parental permission to film adolescents in schools and it is equally important for teacher candidates to rehearse such aspects as camera and tripod placement, framing angles to show students, lighting, audio quality so that students can be heard well, all of which will help reduce teacher candidate anxiety and improve overall video quality.

In sum, edTPA is a high-stakes teacher candidate assessment and care must be taken when developing portfolios for external review. Research shows that teacher candidates have been found to score lower on the assessment task of the portfolio (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014), and the integrated performance assessment appears to have merit when teacher candidates develop their edTPA dossiers.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Central Focus: As defined by SCALE, the important understandings and core concepts that students will develop during the teaching of the learning segment.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): An approach to language instruction that prioritizes target language interaction as both the overarching goal as well as an avenue for accomplishing that goal. This approach focuses primarily on the development of students' communicative competence in a meaningful cultural context.

edTPA: The first nationally available subject-specific performance-based assessment adopted by many U.S. states as a means to measure teacher candidates' developing skills and knowledge.

Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA): A standards-based and performance-based assessment which incorporates three tasks, aligned with a common central focus, that focuses on each of the following modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational.

Learning Segment: As defined by SCALE, a series of three to five days of consecutive instruction centered on a common central focus, marked by identifiable beginning and ending points.

Modes of Communication: Based on ACTFL's stance that communication occurs in three modes: interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational.

Pre-Service Teachers: Also known as teacher candidates, this term is used to describe student teachers who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program and working toward teacher certification. They complete supervised field-based teaching experiences with the support and mentorship of university faculty and K-12 cooperating teachers.