

Chapter 8

Quality Videos and Integrated Performance Assessments Are Essential in the World Language edTPA

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ABSTRACT

For more than 60 years, educational reform in the United States of America has been driven by four major questions revolving around teacher attributes, effectiveness, knowledge, and outcomes. Today, outcomes for not only students but also for those who teach them have become a focal point. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the World Language edTPA—a performance-based, subject-specific assessment for pre-service teachers in 27 content areas that is now in place in 41 states and the District of Columbia. The authors begin by highlighting educational policy and best practices in teaching languages before providing research-based suggestions regarding the development of a high-quality portfolio by focusing on video recording considerations and the use of the integrated performance assessment.

INTRODUCTION

For decades teacher education has been under siege (Swanson, 2017), and teacher preparation in the United States continues to be in educational reformers' crosshairs more than ever these days (Cochran-Smith, 2000). While the Trump administration has focused largely on financial and geopolitical issues, teacher preparation has been the focus since the 1960s when President Lyndon B. Johnson introduced legislation known as the War on Poverty, which Congress passed into law as the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) in 1965 (P.L. 89-10). With such massive impact, the ESEA act

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essentially jump-started the next 60 years of educational reform in the United States (US). Cochran-Smith (2000) advanced the notion that since the mid-1950s educational reform can be documented in terms of four major driving questions: teacher attributes, effectiveness, knowledge, and outcomes. She noted that the political climate shaped the order in which these questions emerged, the kind and degree of public attention afforded to K–12 education, the demand for and supply of teachers, state and federal policies regarding funding, and even perceptions of teacher education as a profession.

Attributes

Beginning with the Eisenhower administration through the 1960s, the Attributes question inquired about the characteristics and of potential teachers, qualities of good teachers and teacher education programs at the time when President Eisenhower and other world leaders noted a severe shortage of language teachers (Swanson, 2012). In terms of teaching world languages (WLs), there were few empirical studies focused on language teachers. Researchers investigated the personal characteristics of teachers, and those that trained them, such as having a friendly voice free of a strong foreign accent and good pronunciation based on accepted standards of usage (Los Angeles City Schools, 1963). Language teaching organizations such as the Modern Language Association promoted the notion that language teachers must be able to command the target language (TL), and they must have factual and conceptual knowledge from various disciplines as well as strong pedagogical knowledge (Axelrod, 1966).

Effectiveness

From the late 1960s through the first Reagan administration in the 1980s, a shift of focus began to emerge with a focus on examining the attributes of teachers and preparation programs. The emphasis on studying teacher and preparation program attributes was replaced with what it means to be an effective instructor. Questions revolved around effective teaching processes and strategies and what teacher education processes were most effective in ensuring that pre-service teachers learn these strategies. Researchers placed attention on effective teaching processes and strategies and what teacher education practices were the most successful in confirming that pre-service teachers learn and use these strategies. It was at this time that many teacher preparation programs invested in and developed systems for evaluating pre-service teachers according to certain objectives as well as performance criteria (Gage, 1972).

With respect to language teaching, for example, world language (WL) program improvement was developed for Indiana colleges and universities focusing on five stages: (1) identifying practices in foreign language (FL) methods in colleges and universities, (2) creating dialogue among methods teachers, (3) enlisting administrator and cooperating teacher support, (4) establishing priorities from the *Guidelines for Teacher Education Programs in Modern Language*, and (5) developing seminars on content, materials, and teaching practices for methods courses in WL teaching (Strasheim, 1967). Other research focused on comparing the effectiveness of different language teacher preparation programs (McInnis & Donoghue, 1980)

Knowledge

From the midpoint of the Reagan administrations in the 1980s and continuing through the Clinton administrations in the 1990s, governmental, and later public, concern about teacher education and teacher

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