THE EXPERIENCES OF UNIVERSITY FACULTY EXPECTED TO IMPLEMENT edTPA

WITHIN A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM

by

Lance Wesley Kilpatrick

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to examine the experiences of university faculty expected to implement a teacher performance assessment called edTPA within a teacher preparation program. This study synthesized the experiences university faculty members have when preparing and implementing the edTPA. A deep examination of 12 university faculty members who teach in teacher preparation programs in a Midwestern state where the edTPA is required for licensure offer their experience through a questionnaire, an individual interview, and a focus group interview. The data were collected, organized, and analyzed by employing transcendental phenomenological systematic data analysis procedures positioned to establish validity of the study and to find commonalities and themes in the data. Five themes were identified. First, the study found that making sense of the edTPA is an evolving process and second, that academic language is a component of the assessment that teacher educators continue to struggle with. Third, teacher educators prepare for the edTPA through local and official scoring. Fourth, teacher educators implement the edTPA by embedding it into the coursework. Fifth, the participants perceive the edTPA as good teaching. The pedagogical content knowledge theory guides this study, as it relates to faculty who teach pre-service teachers in a teacher preparation program.

Keywords: edTPA, student teacher, teacher education, teacher performance assessment, teacher preparation.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my incredible wife Amy Kilpatrick and

to my three kids, Owen, Callie, and Lanae. I love you.

Acknowledgments

I would like to give the glory to my Lord Jesus Christ.

I would like to thank my wife Amy. Your encouragement and the sacrifices you made did not go unnoticed. Thank you for putting up with the long absences and days away to complete this project.

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Thank you to those participants who volunteered their time and helped me with the completion of this dissertation. You are making a difference in the world of teacher education, keep up the good work.

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List of Abbreviations

American Association of Colleges in Teacher Education (AACTE)

Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST)

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)

Council of Chief of State School Officers (CCSSO)

Embedded Signature Assessments (ESAs)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC)

National Board Certified/Certification (NBC)

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ)

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

National Education Association (NEA)

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Pedagogy Content Knowledge (PCK)

Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT)

Race to the Top (RttT)

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE)

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)

Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)

Teacher Work Sample (TWS)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

Across the nation, states are adopting comprehensive policies that require teacher candidates to pass a type of teacher performance assessment to become a certified or licensed teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2010a). The teacher performance assessment used in 40 different states and by over 600 education preparation programs and is called edTPA (American Association of Colleges in Teacher Education, 2015). According to Andrea Whitaker, a representative of SCALE (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, & Equity) "edTPA is not acronym it is a trademark name" (A. Whitaker, personal communication, September 24, 2016, See Appendix A). The edTPA, formally known as the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), is a multi-measure assessment for pre-service teachers that assesses whether a teacher's pedagogical skill and ability improve student achievement. The edTPA was developed by Stanford University's Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) and is supported by multiple national organizations including the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium, a professional learning community of preparation programs, faculty, and state agency leaders (edTPA, 2013).

This chapter will provide a framework for my study where I examine the phenomenon of the preparations university faculty members make as they implement components of the edTPA within their programs. This chapter will provide contextual information about the edTPA, the problem, the purpose of this study and the significance of this study. This chapter will frame the study using the central question: What stories do university faculty have to tell about the experiences with preparing and implementing the edTPA into their teacher preparation program?

This chapter will also provide a detailed research plan, the delimitations and limitations, and will conclude with some useful definitions of words that are used frequently in the study.

Background

The recent increase in teacher accountability and the desire to align assessment practices throughout the teaching profession have been a catalyst for a new look at teacher performance assessment. Darling-Hammond (2012), a professor at Stanford University and a leading scholar in teacher education stated, "For many decades, teachers' scores on traditional paper and pencil tests of basic skills and subject matter, while useful for establishing academic standards, have [not] been significantly related to classroom effectiveness" (p. 9). The edTPA is the first nationally available, subject-specific teacher performance assessment. Its creators call it the educational linchpin to reform teaching and learning for beginning teachers at the beginning of their profession as an educator (edTPA, 2013). Many scholars and educators involved in the design and development of the edTPA have a vision to unify the teaching profession and propose a change in the overall system of education from teacher preparation to advanced teacher professional development.

The edTPA's design and architecture, its alignment to standards, and the national support it is receiving have been a driving force to its acceptance nationwide. Recently, New York, Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Tennessee have developed a statewide policy for the use of the edTPA. Five other states, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Georgia, are also taking steps toward implementation. For example, in the fall of 2015, the state of Illinois and the state of Georgia will require all teacher candidates to pass the edTPA to obtain licensure (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2014; Illinois State Board of Education, 2015). "States set their own passing scores based on state standard setting that takes into account state-

specific data, measurement data, and policy" (edTPA, 2013, p. 6). As different states or

institutions adopt the edTPA they have the opportunity to determine how they will use the

assessment.

In preparation for its use, SCALE provides many resources to help institutions and

faculty to better understand the assessment. SCALE has produced many documents to assist

institutions, faculty, candidates, and other stakeholders with the design of the edTPA. (See

Appendix B)

The literature explains many of the challenges a program can endure when implementing

the edTPA into their program. Metzler (2014) stated,

> Many of the details of edTPA are still unknown, but as teacher educators look to full
>
> implementation in 2015, many of us in Georgia are already making major decisions about
>
> when and how to prepare our candidates for this evaluation. (p. 17)

Wiechman's (2013) evaluation showed that proper implementation of the performance

assessment was an issue for a college in Minnesota. In Wiechman's (2013) study, all faculty

interviewed agreed that "knowing what the performance assessment product is supposed to look

like would help the efforts to continue to design and implement coursework that integrates

naturally and progressively toward the completion of TPA" (p. 66). Wetherington's (2013)

study suggested university faculty members were learning about the edTPA at the same time as

the teacher candidate. Wetherington (2013) stated, "The instructors and administrators working

with the student teachers during the spring 2013 semester had little to no experience with the

edTPA and its process. We quickly learned, while working alongside our students" (p. 1).

Recently many teacher education programs have been faced with the challenge of

preparing their candidates for the TPA or edTPA (Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler, 2014;

Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Wetherington, 2013; Wiechman, 2013). With the possibility of

students not graduating and not receiving their teacher's license after completing four years in a

teacher preparation program, the challenge of preparing preservice teachers for the edTPA must

be faced. To do so, three possible approaches may be considered: (a) Colleges and universities

can continue as normal with the understanding that their programs are fit to prepare teacher

candidates to be successful in the completion of the edTPA with no additional preparation; (b)

The colleges and universities can develop an infrastructure within their program that includes

multiple opportunities for teacher candidates to explore and practice the steps required by the

edTPA during the preparation to become teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Metzler, 2014;

Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Wetherington, 2013; Wiechman, 2013); and (c) The colleges and

universities can "teach to the test" by developing strict training and exercises with deliberate

instructions that will ensure the passing of the edTPA. Use of the third option will lead to a

college or university misaligning their teaching strategy (Denton, 2013) to help teaching

candidates to pass the edTPA.

Since the launching of the edTPA's pilot in 2011, studies have proliferated in the area of

edTPA or like teacher performance assessments. In an effort to display a gap in the research,

and thus qualify this project, a review of the following studies reveals a gap in the literature

concerning the research that investigates the preparation of faculty for the implementation of the

edTPA. There are a number of studies that investigate similar teacher performance assessments

or predecessors that were instrumental to the evolution to the edTPA (Darling-Hammond,

Newton, & Wei, 2012; Kellor, 2002; Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Oluwatayo & Adebule, 2012;

Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010). The research reveals multiple studies

which examined the role of the edTPA and its impact in teacher preparation or in the educational

community (Baptiste, 2012; edTPA, 2013; Girtz, 2014; Knight et al., 2014; Lewis & Young, 2013; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Miller, Carrol, Mitchell, & Markworth, 2015; Peck et al., 2010; Robinson, 2014; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014). There are reports on the design, the development, and the validity of the edTPA (edTPA, 2013, Sato, 2014; Sawchuk, 2013). The literature also examines the edTPA and preservice teachers (Denton, 2013; Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015a; Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015b Hochstetler, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Miller et al., 2015; Sharp, 2010; Wetherington, 2013).

Although, many of the above mentioned studies indicate the challenge of teacher preparation programs is to prepare candidates for success on the edTPA (Denton, 2013; Girtz, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014) at the time of this writing, no studies have addressed the challenge of preparing the faculty of teacher preparation programs for the edTPA.

The proposed research will seek to understand the experiences of university faculty and how the edTPA has impacted them within their teacher preparation program. It will also show a detailed account of what it means to be a university faculty member as they prepare, plan, and make decisions, to guide their candidates for the completion of the edTPA. This research will seek to find consistencies, feelings, perceptions, and reflections of each participant's preparations for the assessment. It is also important to determine the impact the assessment has made on the participants, the teacher candidates, and on the teacher preparation programs and whether university faculty in the study thought to game the system, or as Denton (2013) described, misalign strategies to help candidates successfully pass the edTPA.

Benefits of the research have the potential to be wide reaching. Inducted in 2012, the edTPA is relatively new within teacher education. With the potential of reaching universities on

a national scale, this research may help current or future universities as they prepare or continue to prepare teacher candidates. Because some of the states are using the assessment as a licensing requirement or similar high stakes requirements, teacher preparation programs may look to the literature searching for how to best prepare their candidates for the assessment. The goal of this research is consistent with Darling-Hammond's (2012) goal; she stated, "the critical importance of this move for the teaching profession is that it has the potential to dramatically improve how teachers are prepared and ensure that beginners enter the classroom truly ready to succeed" (p. 14).

Situation to Self

I have served in multiple capacities in the field of education for the past 16 years. My most recent teaching experience has been in higher education, teaching undergraduates and graduates in a teacher education program, preparing pre-service teachers for a variety of content areas and grade levels. For the past five years I have worked closely with the other faculty in our teacher education program in preparation for the oncoming licensure requirements mandated by our state. In the fall of 2015, the edTPA became consequential, meaning teacher candidates must earn a passing score on the edTPA to receive their teaching license and at some institutions, to graduate. With this newly added requirement there has been much discussion about the benefits and challenges the new teacher performance assessment has on our program and will have on teacher candidates and the prospective teacher candidates in the future. As one of the leaders of our department's edTPA implementation program I have found there are mixed feelings among faculty about the edTPA, its introduction to teacher education, and the high stakes nature of the assessment.

The goal of this research was to describe the experience of teacher educators who have prepared for and implemented the edTPA. Using a social constructivist paradigm, I attempted to better understand the impact the edTPA has made on other university faculty as it has impacted me and my colleagues. Creswell (2013) described social constructivism as, "a worldview where individuals seek to understand the world in which they live and work" (p. 20). Through interactions with the participants, I pulled meaning from their views and experiences. Using the ontological philosophical assumption, as discussed by Creswell (2013), I was aware that different realities exist, and I examined and reported on those realities learned from the participants' own words. I was aware throughout my research that my own personal experience may bias the research interpretations. With an understanding of this axiological view, I made a great effort in blocking out my own experiences and thoughts to be as true to the participants as possible. Finally, using an epistemological view, I spent some time with the participants in their environment to better help me understand the phenomenon from their perspective (Creswell, 2013).

Problem Statement

Research suggests a lack of teacher education preparedness for teacher performance assessments (Goodwin et al., 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen, 2014; Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Butler, & Cloonan, 2015; Okhremtchouck et al., 2009; Robinson, 2014; Sato, 2014; Stone, 1998; Wittenbrink, 2013). For example, Stone (1998) revealed lack of time and lack of assistance in preparation by university supervisors. Similarly, student teachers from the Margolis and Doring (2013) study stated there was a lack of preparation for the TPA in previous coursework. Margolis and Doring (2013) wrote, "There were neither models of this type of pedagogy at their student teaching site, nor preparation in their coursework, thereby creating a

perceived mismatch between the TPA gateway into teaching and teaching itself" (p. 278).

Wittenbrink (2013), an advocate of the edTPA and a teacher candidate part of the Western

Washington University's first class to experience the edTPA, shared her initial concern.

Wittenbrink (2013) explained, "None of us—the institution, student teachers, or supervising

teachers—knew much about edTPA. We were all learning" (p. 29). Okhremtchouck et al. (2009)

reported, "mentor teachers had 'nothing to do' with candidates' teacher performance preparation

and maintained an 'indifference to [its] importance and significance'" (p. 54). Okhremtchouck

et al. (2009) recommended for mentor teachers to have a general understanding of the teacher

performance assessment and be prepared to assist the teacher candidate appropriately. The lack

of teacher educator preparedness seems to be a theme for institutions of higher education.

Goodwin et al. (2014) investigated 293 teacher educators and found that teacher educators feel ill

prepared to assume their role in general.

     Although it is well documented that one challenge in teacher education is in the

preparation of faculty to support preservice teachers in the completion the edTPA, (Denton,

2013; Girtz, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Miller et al., 2015; Okhremtchouck

et al., 2009; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014; Wittenbrink, 2013) there is no study that has

examined how institutions, individual states, or educational stakeholders prepare faculty or

colleges of education for the edTPA. At the time of this writing the literature did not indicate

how individual faculty perceive the edTPA, nor did it indicate best practices for edTPA

implementation. In a review of the literature there was no empirical research completed on the

preparation of faculty as they implement the edTPA in their program. This current study allowed

the voices of university faculty to be heard and will help promote a better understanding of the

preparations and implementation processes for the edTPA. The problem of the study is there is

no research giving a voice to teacher educators on their preparation and implementation of the edTPA.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to examine the experiences of university faculty expected to implement the edTPA within a teacher preparation program. The preparations for implementing edTPA core principles are generally defined as the experiences of teacher education faculty who are training teacher candidates for edTPA success. The theory guiding this study is the pedagogical content knowledge theory (PCK) (Shulman, 1987) as it informs the development of general pedagogical skills and pedagogical knowledge in teacher candidates assessed by the edTPA.

Significance of the Study

There is a compelling reason for studying the university faculty who have been charged with the expectation to prepare teacher candidates for the edTPA. The preparations university faculty make in the implementation process of the edTPA may have a large impact on teacher candidate success in passing the edTPA. Also, with the expansion of the edTPA across 40 states and growing, this study has a great significance in filling the gap in the literature for how university faculty and teacher preparation programs as a whole equip themselves for the implementation of the edTPA. In the past five years there have been multiple studies about the edTPA or other statewide teacher performance assessments (Baptiste, 2012; Bird, 2012; Dover et al., 2015a; Dover et al., 2015b; Knight et al., 2014; Girtz, 2014; Hochstetler, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Meuwissen et al., 2015; Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014; Sato, 2014; Traister, 2013; Wetherington, 2013; Wiechman, 2013; Wiens, 2013). "When assessments both predict teacher effectiveness and

support individual and institutional learning they can help to create an engine for stimulating

greater teacher effectiveness in the system as a whole" (Darling-Hammond, 2012, p. 21).

Likewise, this assessment is also an engine for stimulating research to see how assessments like

the edTPA are changing teacher preparation programs and being used in the field to develop

teacher candidates.

To date there are no qualitative studies with the purpose of examining the experiences of

university faculty—to hear from their own words about their journey in how the edTPA has

impacted them professionally and their feelings about the implementation of the assessment

within their program. This study may be of significance to other university faculty who are

preparing for the edTPA and desire to learn the challenges and benefits the assessment can have

on their program. Finally, this study may also be a benefit to the policy makers at the state level

to help them understand the implications of the implementation of the edTPA and the process a

faculty member takes to implement the assessment within their program.

Research Questions

The central research question guiding this study is: What stories do university faculty

have to tell about their experiences with preparing and implementing the edTPA into their

teacher preparation program? Because of the national spotlight the edTPA has received, multiple

studies have outlined the arguments for and against the edTPA (Adkins, Spesia, & Snakenborg,

2015; Au, 2013; Chiu, 2014; Dover et al., 2015a; Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013; Mehta &

Doctor, 2013; Sato, 2014).

The majority of the research on edTPA is quantitative in nature (Baptiste, 2012; Bird,

2012; edTPA, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Okhremtchouk et al., 2009;

Traister, 2013; Wetherington, 2013; Wiechman, 2013; Wiens, 2013) or provides scholarly

research or theory behind the assessment (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; Knight et al., 2014; Lewis & Young, 2013; Lynn, 2014; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014; Sato, 2014; Sawchuk, 2013). To date there is no qualitative study with the sole purpose of giving a voice to the university faculty to hear in their own words about their journey of preparing and implementing the principles of the edTPA into their preservice teacher education program.

Teacher educators have a range of opinions in regards to the edTPA (Sawchuk, 2013). One study has indicated that teacher educators feel the edTPA process strengthens their practice (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013). Adkins et al. (2015) explained that the implementation of the edTPA has brought a significant amount of improvement to their teacher education programs. Similarly, Au (2013) stated, "the edTPA has made a significant impact on my program" (p. 23). Others have reported difficulty in transitioning to the edTPA (Hyler, n.d.). Madeloni and Gorlewski (2013) pointed to the edTPA as an imposition on teacher education and a limiter of opportunities of teaching and learning, and of academic freedom among teacher educators. Dover et al. (2015a) believe the potential of outsourcing edTPA assistance decontextualizes teaching and tempts candidates to succeed through untraditional means. Another teacher educator refuses to have the edTPA control what it means to be a successful educator (Sawchuk, 2013). Meuwissen et al. (2015) reported many teacher preparation programs were still deciphering the process of edTPA completion when preparing candidates for the assessment. With over 600 preparation programs in 40 states and the District of Columbia participating in edTPA (AACTE, 2015a) the widespread implications of this question are broad. Four attendant questions also guide this study:

1. How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

There is a great responsibility for teacher educators to ensure all teacher candidates are prepared to successfully pass the edTPA (Girtz, 2014; Hyler, Yee, Carey, & Barnes, n.d.; Robinson, 2014). SCALE offered multiple presentations, webinars, testimonies, and handouts online to help teacher educators prepare their program for the edTPA (edTPA, 2013). Multiple studies indicated a lack of preparedness for the new performance assessment (Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen, 2014; Okhremtchouck et al., 2009; Robinson, 2014; Sato, 2014; Stone, 1998; Wittenbrink, 2013). Universities are using the edTPA as a part of a process to revamp teacher preparation (Hyler, n.d.). The edTPA has changed the way some teacher preparation programs practice (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013). According to Sawchuk (2013) faculty warm up to the edTPA, find the assessment can strengthen their teaching, and embed components of the assessment into their practice.

2. What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA? Loughran (2014) believes the launch of new performance assessments is a good avenue for professional development of teacher educators. Teacher preparation programs are faced with the challenge of meeting the increasing demands on their curriculum while contact time with teacher candidates remains the same (Girtz, 2014). It has been reported that the process of scoring for the PACT, causes faculty to reexamine their teaching practices, develop new lessons, and model teaching in a way that may help better develop teacher candidates build necessary teaching skills (Darling-Hammond, 2010a). The edTPA is also reported to yield "cross-integrated dialogue about teacher preparation" (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013, p. 15). At a time when teacher educators feel unprepared in their role to teach preservice teachers (Goodwin et al., 2014) the preparation for the edTPA may be another notch of unpreparedness.

3. What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

Peck et al. (2014) cited multiple studies (Bunch, Aguirre, & Tellez, 2009; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Torgerson et al., 2009) indicating faculty learning and improvement practice are related to the implementation to teacher performance assessments like the edTPA. Another study described how multiple faculty from a variety of institutions revised coursework and field assessments to better prepare their candidates for the edTPA (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013). The edTPA field test from 2013 recommended that teacher preparation programs must learn how to support up to date teaching practices with useful tools to develop and assess pre-service teachers (edTPA, 2013). Wetherington (2013) indicated the process to implement the edTPA was "rigorous, intense, at times frustrating . . . however tremendously worthwhile" (p. 1).

4. How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perception, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

Stakeholders of teacher preparation programs have program purposes, professional commitments, and outcomes for teacher candidates that illustrate the stages of teacher preparation often communicated in a programs conceptual framework (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2014). Caughlan and Jiang (2014) stress teacher educators should judgmentally look at the instruments used in performance assessments to define teaching and professionalism for their programs, and be advocates for maintaining their place in defining teaching and learning. With increasing mandates, one teacher educator questions what it means for teacher educators to meet obligations for institutions' mission, research expectations, and prepare them for high-stakes external assessments to meet new state requirements (Girtz, 2014). Lynn (2014) stated, "If we are going to change practice in teacher education on a large scale, we are going to have to overcome our discomfort with change and demand more of ourselves and our students" (p. 2). Opponents to the edTPA argue in having a

common performance assessment and regulating how teacher preparation programs prepare their candidates diminishes the variety of approaches valued by individual teacher preparation programs (Sawchuk, 2013). Proponents of the edTPA suggest the edTPA is designed within the framework of teaching as a profession and has been built for teacher candidates aspiring to become a part of it (Sato, 2014).

Research Plan

Van Manen (1990) explained the purpose of "phenomenological research is the study of lived experience" (p. 9). Similarly, according to Moustakas (1994) the purpose of phenomenological research is to "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (p. 14). A transcendental approach was decided on because it involves setting aside prejudgments (Moustakas, 1994). The final outcome of this phenomenology is to "reduce the individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence . . ." of that phenomenon (Creswell, 2013, p. 58). Moustakas (1994) noted the focus of phenomenological research is to, "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (p. 13). In order to discover what the experience of implementing the edTPA into a teacher preparation program means to a university faculty member, I probed university faculty who have lived through the experience, and I sought to find what it means to incorporate the principles of the edTPA into their program.

The participants for this phenomenological study included 12 university faculty members who teach in an undergraduate or graduate teacher preparation program, and were expected to implement edTPA principles into their curriculum. After obtaining approval from the

Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University, the data were collected by way of a questionnaire, interviews, and focus groups. After the data were collected, it was organized into significant themes, and then reduced to find the universal essence of the phenomenon.

Delimitations and Limitations

The purposeful decisions I made in choosing the participants in the study led to multiple delimitations. Creswell (2013) noted that delimitations narrow the scope of the study. Because the researched phenomenon took place inside teacher education programs at universities, the persons investigated were university faculty in a teacher education undergraduate or graduate programs. Another delimitation was where the universities were located. Since the edTPA is only a requirement in some states, and because the edTPA has high stakes consequences in only a handful of states, I was confined to select universities from the same state. Therefore, an additional delimitation was the location of the universities included in the study.

Multiple potential limitations existed for this study. The first potential limitation was its generalizability to the public because of the use of a purposive sample (Schutt, 2012). The second limitation was the size of the study. Since there were only 12 participants from one state, the study cannot be generalized. The third limitation was the geographic location. For the sake of convenience, the participants work at universities within driving distance of where I live.

Definitions

1. *edTPA* – edTPA is the first nationally available, performance assessment designed by educators for beginning teachers. The edTPA is a subject specific assessment that uses evidence developed in a portfolio from the planning, instruction, and assessment phases of a learning segment. (edTPA, 2013).

2. *Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)* – is described as the particular form of content knowledge that embodies the aspects of content teaching ability. It is the ways of representing and formulating a topic so others can understand the topic (Shulman, 1986).

3. *Student* – refers to the children and youth attending pre-school, elementary school, middle school or high school (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2014).

4. *Teacher Candidate* – refers to the individual admitted to, or enrolled in programs for the initial or advanced preparation of teachers. Teacher candidates are distinguished from *students* in P-12 schools (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2014).

5. *Teacher Education* – is a program concerned with the development of teacher proficiency and competence. It encompasses teaching skills, sound pedagogical theory, and professional skills (Kennedy, 1997).

6. *University faculty* – for the current study, university faculty are individuals employed by a college or university, who teach one or more courses in education, advise candidates, and supervise student teaching or clinical experience (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2014).

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

This chapter introduced the edTPA, its definition, its use, and its impact on teacher preparation programs around the country. This is followed by my own situation and how the edTPA plays a part in my professional responsibilities. Next, the study's foundation is provided by describing the problem that occurs in the field of education, the problem within the literature, and then offers the purpose statement of the study. The chapter examines an overview of the literature on the edTPA, and offers background to the research questions, while also identifying a

gap in the literature. Finally, the chapter ends with a description of the research plan, the delimitations which help focus the study, and the more important terms used throughout the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

"Just as education plays an important role in shaping the world of tomorrow, it is in turn shaped by current and future economic, political, demographic, and technological forces" (Parkay, Anctil, & Hass, 2010, p. 49). Recently, educational leaders and political leaders have been shaping the way teacher preparation programs prepare and assess teacher candidates through the development of the edTPA. Many scholars and educators involved in the design and development of the edTPA have a vision to unify the teaching profession and propose a change in the overall system of education from teacher preparation to advanced teacher professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2010b; Lewis & Young, 2013; Mehta & Doctor, 2013). This unification is a heavy task and a goal for a variety of scholars and researchers as they attempt to further expand the knowledge and understanding of teacher education and teacher preparation. To identify foundational research and the recent studies used in the development of the edTPA, I used SCALE's (2015) edTPA Annotated Bibliography to inform my decision making. The annotated bibliography presents "research literature that informs the development of the edTPA and its rationale as a performance based assessment for preservice teacher candidates' readiness to teach" (SCALE, 2015, p. 1).

This literature review examines the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) theory and its role in expanding and improving teachers' ability by way of improving their PCK. SCALE (2015a) uses PCK as described by, Ball, Thames, and Phelps (2008), Galguera (2011), Hashweh (2005), Hill, Ball, and Schilling (2008), and Shulman (1986) as a foundation to inform design principles of, and formation for, the common architecture of edTPA (SCALE, 2015a). In addition, research regarding essentialism as an educational theory for how educational concepts

may be understood is a focal point, in considering training pre-service teachers about the ins and outs of the edTPA. Furthermore, this review will also take an in-depth look into many areas closely related to the edTPA, such as: the evolution of teacher performance assessments, teacher education and teacher education reform, the complexities of teacher education, and a review of the current status of the literature on the edTPA.

Theoretical Framework

Teacher educators stress the importance for teacher candidates to understand the content they teach is different from the content they learned when they were in school learning from their teachers. Teacher candidates must convert the knowledge and content they previously learned into useable school curriculum. Then the candidate must transform the knowledge into something that has meaning for the pupil. This conversion and transformation is what is meant by the expression, pedagogical content knowledge (Murray, 1991). Shulman (1986), a leader and scholar in education, desired to improve the knowledge on teaching and teacher preparation. In his research he ignored the need for teachers to train in content knowledge, rather he emphasized the development of general pedagogical skills and pedagogical knowledge. In his view, teacher educator's only developing a teacher candidate's content knowledge was insufficient. The key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching rests in a balance of both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, thus creating PCK (Shulman, 1987).

PCK is defined as teachers' understandings and conversions of subject-matter knowledge in order to facilitate student learning (Shulman, 1986). Shulman, professor emeritus from Stanford University and past president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, expanded his theory (1987) when he attempted to organize all of the types of knowledge a teacher needs to promote comprehension among students. The different categories

of teach knowledge include, (a) content knowledge, (b) general pedagogical knowledge, (c) curriculum knowledge, (d) pedagogical content knowledge, (e) knowledge of learners, (f) knowledge of educational contexts, and (g) knowledge of educational end (Shulman, 1987). Shulman's (1987) focus however is on PCK because it classifies the differing areas of knowledge for teaching. "It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (Shulman, 1987, p. 8). PCK is not opposite to theoretical knowledge. It requires both teaching and learning theories learned during teacher preparation as well as practices, understandings, and experiences gained school background and by being in the classroom.

The development of PCK is influenced by many factors. Most notable, is a teacher's personal experience as a student and the context and environment in which he or she teaches. PCK is seated in the understandings and experiences of each student, their families and the community. Shulman (1987) warned:

The great danger occurs, however, when general teaching principle is distorted into prescription, when maxim becomes mandate. Those states that have taken working principles of teacher, based solely on empirical studies of generic teaching effectiveness, and have rendered them as a hard independent criteria for judging a teacher's worth, are engaged in a political process like to injure the teaching profession rather than improve it. (p. 11)

PCK is a conversation of the proper methods of organizing information and knowledge. Murray (1991) explained, "It is the search for structures, ways of representing the subject matter, analogies, and metaphors that will take each pupil well beyond what can be put together

temporally and spatially through rote memorization" (p. 79). Pedagogical content knowledge are central to the work of a professional educator and it cannot be avoided. Having the knowledge to offer a compelling example, a telling analogy, a provocative question, and a convincing theme is a proper thing for every educator to know. Educators need to have many different ways of representing an idea or concept. To have an additional example or metaphor and to have more than one way or a different way of explaining a thought is a high order of subject matter understanding (Murray, 1991). In essence, an effective teacher does not only know the content, but knows the content in such a way that it can be presented in a fashion that can be disseminated or learned by a student.

As an example, a common way for science teachers to teach electric current is by likening it to the behavior of water currents in different sized pipes. One might ask, "Is this a good way to think about electricity, and how would one know?" The answer to the question is not found in physics or education. It is found in a different kind of knowledge stemming from one's experience or conversations between disciplinarians and pedagogues (Murray, 1991).

Fenstermacher's (1994) study adds to the literature on the knowledge that teachers build from their experiences in the classroom and the time spent honing their craft as educators. This experience-like knowledge is different than the knowledge learned from the specialized research and theories of teaching. This apparent difference can be considered an alternative approach to teaching rather than the more conventional scientific approaches to the study of teaching. Fenstermacher (1994) argued, "Although Shulman and his colleagues clearly focus on the topic of teacher knowledge in ways that have deepened our understanding of the interconnections between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, their epistemological framing is difficult to isolate and analyze" (p. 16).

Fenstermacher (1994) offered four questions to better understand this approach: (a) What is known about effective teaching? (b) What do teachers know? (c) What knowledge is essential for teaching? (d) Who produces knowledge about teaching? Fenstermacher offered two types of knowledge, the first type is known as Teacher Knowledge: Formal (TK/F). This type of knowledge is defined as the product-process studies of teaching. The second type of knowledge is Teacher Knowledge: Practical (TK/P). This type of knowledge is developed through action, experience, and reflection. This type of knowledge is generally related to how to do things, and understanding the right place and time to do them (Fenstermacher, 1994).

As the concept of PCK grew, it was in need of further development, clarification, and tested through research. Hashweh (2005) reviewed the history of PCK and developed a new conceptualization called, Teacher Pedagogical Constructions to address problems identified with PCK. Hashweh (2005) offered seven assertions that more precisely define and clarify PCK. Ball et al.'s (2008) study developed measures of mathematical knowledge for teaching and suggest at least two empirically discernable subdomains within PCK; knowledge of content and students and knowledge of content and teaching. These subdomains were developed by studying mathematics teaching and by analyzing specific mathematical knowledge used in the teaching of mathematical problems. Ball et al.'s research also suggested another important subdomain of "pure" content knowledge distinctive to the field of teaching; labeled specialized content knowledge. Specialized content knowledge is particular to the discipline and is different from common knowledge known by teachers and non-teachers alike (Ball et al., 2008). In a similar strain, Fogo (2014) identified and defined core teaching practices for secondary history education.

Mecoli's (2013) study saw Shulman's PCK theoretical framework made a great impact

on research in teacher preparation. Mecoli's review builds from Grossman's (1990) oft-cited case studies, which concluded that beginning teachers provided with excellent teacher education developed more substantial PCK than novice teachers without this coursework. Mecoli's research expressed the application of PCK in teacher education has multiple benefits including: (a) means of reflecting on practice and what is known and unknown; (b) preparing prospective teachers for future acquisition of PCK; and (c) allowing prospective teachers to examine the difference between a student simply "knowing the answer" and understanding the process (Mecoli, 2013).

The PCK theory expressed by Shulman and then built on by others has reached a place where it now has a foothold in education. A main component analyzed within the edTPA is a teacher candidate's subject specific pedagogical practices. For example, SCALE (2015a) cites Shulman's (1986) study as a foundation in the literature to assess a teacher candidate's ability to plan for content understanding. In rubric one of the edTPA, *Planning for Content Understandings*, candidates must articulate "the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (SCALE, 2015a, p. 11). Similarly, in rubric three, *Using Knowledge of Students to Inform Teaching and Learning*, SCALE, (2015a) cites Hill et al. (2008) as a foundational source for a rubric construct that defines effective teaching that includes having the unique knowledge of students' ideas and thinking. Teacher candidates must articulate in the edTPA a combined knowledge of content and students. In rubric four of the edTPA, *Identifying and Supporting Language Demands*, SCALE, (2015a) cites Galguera's (2011) study regarding his recommendations regarding academic language use as another form of PCK. In rubric nine, *Subject Specific Pedagogy,* SCALE (2015a) uses Ball et al. (2008) and Hashweh's (2005) study as a rubric construct identifying that teacher candidates must articulate "a core or

signature subject specific strategies to develop and deepen student understanding and knowledge" (SCALE, 2015a, p. 48). In other words a candidate's knowledge of the content and their knowledge of content and teaching (PCK) are important to be an effective teacher.

SCALE (2013) stated, "The deliberate focus on shared pedagogical competency and knowledge across subject specific assessments reflects the universal deep structure of teaching across the content areas" (p. 11). A teacher candidate's ability to demonstrate PCK is an essential part of the edTPA. In the creation of the edTPA, its designers used research literature and recent studies to inform the development of the assessment and each rubric and thus decide what other elements of effective teaching are essential. As teacher preparation programs prepare for the successful implementation of the edTPA they will likely focus on the essential components that were used by SCALE to define effective teaching. In doing so, teacher educators may adopt an essentialist philosophy and prescribe the content and their instruction in a format that is paralleled with the required assessment.

Related Literature

This literature review examines the topics related to the experiences of university faculty who are expected to prepare and implement the edTPA. To better understand how faculty may be directed and respond to the edTPA, essentialism is described as an educational philosophy one might use to manage the assessment and the high stakes features it represents for many institutions. The structure and most of the components of the edTPA have been captured from other teacher performance assessment predecessors. This review focuses on the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program, the Performance Assessment of California Teachers (PACT), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), and how these assessments led to the creation and a

large scale adoption of the edTPA. Another area this review synthesizes is the field of teacher

education, and the complexities of the field to address the current climate faculty are under in

teacher education. The conclusion of this review, examines the literature of the edTPA and

illustrates where this study sits amongst the other studies and research.

Essentialism

Teacher educators may be very familiar with essentialism. It is common for teacher

educators who help prepare teacher candidates by introducing them to a wide spread of

philosophies in education. Some of the more popular philosophies include perennialism,

progressivism, reconstructionism, constructivism, behaviorism, humanism, and essentialism

(Sadker, Zittleman, & Sadker, 2010). The focus of this type of instruction provides novice

teachers an understanding the differences between student centered and teacher centered

instruction. The recent push for measuring student success in today's educational system has

strong ties to the essentialism learning theory. Since the 1930's, essentialism has been a

dominant influence in education (Sadker et al., 2010). Factors such as the launching of Sputnik

in 1957, the 1983 report, A Nation at Risk (United States National Commission on Excellence in

Education,1983), standardized testing mandated by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), increased

immigration into the United States, and intense global economic competition has kept

essentialism at center stage (Sadker et al., 2010). With the growing popularity of the edTPA,

educators will view this philosophy of education as it becomes more accepted or approved

among teacher educators.

Imig and Imig (2006) stated "Essentialists have long controlled the agenda for public

schooling in America, and it is evident as well that their influence has prevailed in both the form

and function of teacher education" (p. 170). Essentialism is an educational theory that strives to

teach the "essentials," traditional basic subjects thoroughly and rigorously (Buford, 1969).
William S. Learned, William C. Bagley, E. D. Hirsch, Diane Ravitch, and Theodore Sizer stand
out as proponents of the Essentialist philosophy (Collins, 1998). William S. Learned and
William C. Bagley, in the early 1900s, asserted that content matters and the focus of schooling
should be on student learning. They believe educators are responsible for setting high
expectations, for leading whole classes of students, and for directing student learning toward
measurable ends (Imig & Imig, 2006).

Together, Learned and Bagley (1920) established their philosophy in what is known as
The Learned Report. This report indicated teachers should be assessed on the effectiveness of
their teaching in regards to student learning (Imig & Imig, 2006). "Effective teachers should be
gauged by the performance of their pupils" (Imig & Imig, 2006, p.169). Imig and Imig (2006)
argued that essentialist have won the battle in defining the purpose of schooling, the organization
of the school curriculum, the role of the teacher, and the methods used to evaluate student
achievement and teacher effectiveness. Imig and Imig are not advocates for essentialism, but
attempt to inform others what is driving the policymaking for teachers and teacher education.

One force driving the making of policy for teaching and teacher education was the No
Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002. This act required states to adopt standards and assess
student learning using annual standardized tests. According to NCLB, all students should be
performing on grade level by 2014. Student performance is measured by an individual's ability
to meet a certain standard within the time allotted. This is consistent with the essential theory.
According to the essentialism theory, teachers should teach what the student needs to know and
students are tested based on what the teacher has taught (Hirsch, 1997). Student achievement is
measured on the performance and level of success each student has on the state assessments

(Gimbert, Cristol, & Sene, 2007). The NCLB act requires highly qualified teachers in every classroom. Each teacher can be qualified by showing mastery of their discipline through the achievement shown by their students on the assessments.

The push of essentialism and the need to be able to measure highly qualified teachers is a powerful force in laying the "groundwork for changing every aspect of teaching and teacher education" (Imig & Imig, 2006, p. 168). Today, teacher quality continues to be measured by teacher effectiveness. When assessed with the edTPA, teacher candidates must demonstrate the abilities or essential components of effective teaching as determined by the edTPA framework. To achieve edTPA success in their program, teacher preparation programs and teacher educators may take on an essentialist philosophy focusing only on those essential components decided upon with the creation of the edTPA. Much of the preparation that may dominate in teacher education programs is the training to successfully pass the edTPA. High stakes consequences are likely to drive teacher educators this direction with the purpose of helping teacher candidates fulfill graduation requirements, teacher certification requirements, or teacher licensure requirements as determined by states and accreditation agencies. Multiple sources have indicated that teacher preparation programs have made numerous changes to their program or have redesigned their entire program to infuse edTPA concepts through their program (Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler 2014; Wetherington, 2013; Whitcomb, n.d.; Wittenbrink, 2013). Denton (2013) indicated teacher preparation programs may take extreme measures in the preparation of their candidates by exploring only the essential components needed to pass the assessment.

Teacher Performance Assessments

Over the past three decades, there has been a great demand for teaching performance assessments. In the review of the literature, there are a large variety of assessments embedded in teacher preparation programs. "States have created a crazy quilt of assessments that add up to 1,100 different tests across the nation" (Darling-Hammond, 2010a, p. 4). These assessments can be categorized in many ways; they include: (a) standardized tests, (b) value added assessments, and (c) performance assessments such as, (d) portfolio assessments and teacher work sampling, (e) child case studies, (f) on-demand performance tasks, and (g) observation based instruments and systems. An increasing debate around teacher quality and the search for performance models that can adequately assess teacher effectiveness led to an evaluation of a range of performance based assessment instruments across teacher education programs.

Performance based methods provide excellent measures of authentic teaching tasks, but they are subjective and vary significantly in psychometric rigor across programs (Wei & Pecheone, 2010). To address this dilemma, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the AACTE, and Stanford University formed the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC) to study three performance-based models. The models include the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) for pre-service teachers, the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program for beginning teachers, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) for veteran teachers (AACTE, 2015a; Darling-Hammond, 2010a). It was from this study the predecessor of the edTPA, the nationally available Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) was developed. Roots of the edTPA can be traced back to the BEST program, an early pioneer in the teacher performance assessment category.

Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST)

The Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program was developed in Connecticut in the mid 1980's in an effort to improve student achievement by improving teacher quality (Kellor, 2002). Its primary use is for licensing teachers. Novice teachers who hold an initial education certificate must successfully complete the BEST program requirements to be eligible for Connecticut's second tier teacher who holds provisional educator certificate. The BEST program is one arm of the Connecticut State Department of Education's (2001) comprehensive, long-term, and multi-pronged reform strategy, whose mission is:

> To ensure that every Connecticut student is taught by a highly qualified, competent and caring teacher . . . and to help ensure that all beginning teachers have opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of subject matter and instructional strategies, enhance their understanding of students as learners, and begin a process of lifelong learning and professional growth. (p. 1)

Although one could look at the individual components of the BEST program in isolation, to fully understand the program, it would need to look at the progress, the initiatives and the change that has taken place over the past 30 years. The initiatives that have taken place address four main goals designed to improve the quality of teaching in Connecticut and thus improve student learning, including: (a) increasing teacher salaries; (b) implementing student learning standards (Common Core of Learning); (c) creating teaching standards (Common Core of Teaching); (d) establishing a multi-level licensure system, including four steps that need to be completed to obtain an educator license (Kellor, 2002).

The backbone of the BEST program is the Common Core of Teaching (CCT), a set of skills and competencies that Connecticut teachers are expected to develop and demonstrate.

Another integral part of the BEST program is the Common Core Learning (CCL) student

learning standards. The alignment of the CCT and the CCL allow for novice teachers to become

prepared in the core teaching and the core knowledge necessary for effective teaching (Miller,

Morely, & Westwater, 2002).

The teacher preparation cycle in Connecticut requires all candidates for teacher

certification successfully complete specific assessment requirements. For example, before a

teacher candidate can enter a teacher preparation program, he or she must show competency in

reading, writing, and mathematics by passing the Praxis I Pre-Professional Skills Test. Next,

teacher candidates are required to demonstrate content knowledge in the intended teaching

area(s) by taking the Praxis II Subject Knowledge Test and either the American Council of

Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) assessment or the Connecticut Administrator Test

(Kellor, 2002).

The performance assessment portion of the BEST program is delivered in the form of a

structured instructional portfolio and is completed during the second year of a novice teacher's

teaching career. The portfolio demonstrates the teaching standards in four areas known as tasks:

planning, teaching, assessment of student learning, and analysis of instruction. These tasks

include all of the deliverables from the teacher. The deliverables include lesson plans, video of

teaching, student samples, and teacher reflections (Miller et al., 2002). The portfolio

requirements vary slightly across disciplines. The portfolios are scored by experienced educators

who evaluate the portfolios in three steps: the collection of evidence, the interpretation of the

evidence, and the evaluation of the portfolio based on an identified scoring rubric (Miller et al.,

2002).

Connecticut's BEST program is an effort extending beyond teachers; ultimately the

program is set up to benefit the students (Miller et al., 2002). Connecticut's strategy attempts to qualify teachers prior to entering the ranks as professional teachers and integrate state level student and teacher standards across all stages of teacher training and licensure. The program requires a high level of involvement and support from current teachers and administrators (Kellor, 2002). By setting high standards, Miller et al. (2002) explained that the program increases the quality of instruction for students through high standards of performance. Components of the BEST program and similar strategies have been developed in California in attempt to reach a higher standard for pre-service teachers.

Performance Assessment of California Teachers (PACT)

Reform efforts in California developed a similar assessment to the BEST called the California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA). After the development of the CalTPA teacher education reform activities continued in California and led to the creation of Performance Assessment of California Teachers (PACT) (Okhremtchouck et al., 2009). Developed in 2001, the PACT requires teacher preparation programs to use a common performance assessment as one measure in making credentialing decisions (Pecheone & Chung, 2006). The assessments, called Teaching Events, were to draw from artifacts created while teaching, accompanied by commentaries that provide context and rationales needed to understand and interpret submitted artifacts.

The design of the Teaching Events was modeled after the portfolio assessments of the Connecticut State Department of Education, INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) and the National Board (PACT, n.d.). With a total of 12 institutions (eight University of California Institutions, San Diego State University, San Jose State University, Mills University, and Stanford University) forming the PACT consortium, a collaborative team

of faculty/supervisors, trainers, scorers, and subject specific experts, identified the needs for improvement in the field and collectively improved the Teaching Events assessment.

There are a number of key items which distinguish the difference between the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) assessments and the PACT assessments. The PACT Teaching Events are more integrated by capturing a unified learning segment whereas one going through National Board Certification (NBC) captures multiple lessons through the school year. The PACT Teaching Events are designed to measure teacher performance at a pre-service level, whereas, NBC measures advanced veteran teachers. Finally, teachers attempting to become nationally board certified must also show how they are involved in the community, whereas, the PACT does not have any requirement of the sort.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

In 1987, the NBPTS was established through a Carnegie Foundation Grant to define, assess, and recognize accomplished teaching (NBPTS, 1991). The standards, assessments and scoring rubrics are based upon five core propositions of accomplished teaching. The five core propositions as stated by the NBPTS (1989) are as follows:

1) Teachers are committed to students and their learning.

2) Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.

3) Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.

4) Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.

5) Teachers are members of learning communities. (p. 3-4)

National Board Certification (NBC) is an advanced teaching credential for veteran teachers who voluntarily complete an assessment program designed to recognize excellence among continuing teachers and identify "the knowledge, skills, and dispositions teachers must have to engage in

accomplished practice" (Porter, Youngs, & Odden, 2001, p. 265). The National Board

Certification is a year-long certification process consisting of 10 exercises, which are divided

into portfolio exercises and assessment center exercises. The assessment center exercises require

teachers to provide instructional plans, analyze student work samples, view and respond to video

clips, and participate in simulations (Lustick & Sykes, 2006). The National Board offers

certification in 27 different areas of expertise. According to Lustick and Sykes, (2006)

"completing the portfolio is a demanding, rigorous, and at times tedious process embedded in the

day-to-day work of teachers" (p. 9). The NBC process has received numerous endorsements by

a wide range of organizations including, the National Education Association (NEA). The NEA

views its support of this advanced, voluntary certification as "an important part of its long-

standing efforts to enhance standards for—as well as perceptions of—the teaching profession"

(NEA, 2014, para. 2).

Lustick and Sykes (2006) cited multiple teachers who have acknowledged the benefits of

the NBC to their practice. Furthermore, Reese (2010) also cited a number of studies claiming

NBC teachers have had a greater impact on student learning than their non-board certified

counterparts. Similarly, Goldhaber, Perry, and Anthony's (2004) study in North Carolina,

Vandevoort, Amrien-Beardsley, and Berliner's (2004) study in Arizona, and Cavalluzo's (2004),

study in Florida reported NBC teachers' students achieved higher scores on achievement tests

and made a positive impact on student learning. It is believed the NBC process represents sound

professional development practice. The process is highly collaborative, it uses teacher self-

reflection and inquiry linked to the teacher's environment and teaching practice while focusing

on subject matter content and student learning (Lustick & Sykes, 2006). It is the sound

professional development practice and the process NBC candidate's experience that was desired

in the creation of the Teacher Performance Assessment for teacher candidates.

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)

The Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) branches from the previous assessments in this review and from other assessments in educational literature for 25 years. TPA supporters claimed the TPA had the potential to transform teaching. The TPA consists of a series of formative Embedded Signature Assessments (ESAs) unique to the goals of the individual educator program, and a common standardized capstone assessment called the Teaching Event. The Teaching Event is a subject specific, multi-measure assessment system allowing the teacher to document his or her teaching and learning in a three to five day learning segment for one class of students (AACTE, 2011).

Throughout the assessment, teacher candidates produce evidence through the use of artifacts and commentaries showing the candidates ability to plan, instruct, assess, analyze teaching, and use academic language. Artifacts of evidence include lesson plans, instructional materials, assessment materials, video clips, and student work samples. Commentaries are the teacher candidates' written thoughts, explanations, rationale and reflections on what was done prior to, during, and after the learning segment. Stanford University (2010) described:

> To complete the assessment, students describe their plans, and what they actually did to achieve student learning (the "what"), provide a rationale for their plans and analysis of the effects of their teaching on their students' learning (the "so what"), and analyze and reflect on the resulting student learning to plan next steps in instruction or improvements in their teaching practice (the "now what"). (p. 1)

The commentaries are developed from a series of prompts guiding the teacher candidate through the assessment. The artifacts and commentaries are placed in a portfolio and then sent to a scorer

who will use a series of rubrics containing the teaching competencies to be assessed. The major goal for the development of the TPA was to produce a national instrument that will rigorously assess the performance of teachers (AACTE, 2011).

The BEST, an assessment for teachers at the end of induction; the PACT, an assessment model for pre-service teachers, the NBPTS, an assessment for accomplished teachers; and the TPA, an assessment for pre-service teachers, have been touted as robust and authentic teacher assessments. Each assessment showed a positive impact on teachers, their teaching, and student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010a; Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Reese, 2010). Together these assessments have paved the way for the newest nationally available teacher performance assessment, the Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA).

edTPA: The Assessment

The edTPA is an assessment tool for teacher candidates developed from a partnership between the SCALE and AACTE. The edTPA exists in part, to provide teacher preparation programs with a multiple-measure assessment aligned to the Common Core Standards and Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards, to help assess teacher candidates' mastery of essential instructional capacities (edTPA, n.d.).

Similarly to PACT and the TPA, candidates completing edTPA assemble a portfolio. The portfolio is organized into three areas of performance, called tasks: planning, instruction, and evaluation. Candidates use a subject-specific handbook, scoring rubrics, and writing prompts to complete the portfolio requirements. All subject areas, other than world languages, are scored using 15 rubrics, equally divided between the three tasks. Each rubric has a range of one to five points, with clearly written descriptors of the five scores possible for each rubric. edTPA portfolios generally consist of three to five lesson plans, instructional materials, one or

two video clips, assessment criteria, and work samples from three students. Candidates are expected to write approximately 30 pages of commentary to describe the context of students, their use of subject-specific pedagogy, and analysis of student learning (edTPA, n.d.). Described above are some of the general edTPA requirements. Some institutions and some states, like Washington, may have additional components than what has been described.

The views of the edTPA vary. Mehta and Doctor (2013) claimed the edTPA raises the bar for the teaching profession. They claim, "The edTPA is in the relatively early stages, but appears to be an important piece of the puzzle that would need to be paired with a similarly rigorous assessment of knowledge and assessments of more advanced teaching" (p. 11). Some teacher educators are challenging the loss in the ability to recommend students for certification and licensure. Some scholars have likened the edTPA to a "bar exam for teaching" (Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014, p. 80). Teacher preparation faculty are concerned corporate scorers do not know the teacher candidates, nor are aware of the context of the teaching sample (Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014). Chiu (2014) a teacher candidate who was required to complete the edTPA expressed her thoughts about the assessment. She stated:

> edTPA depersonalizes the craft of teaching. A distant, anonymous scorer does not know me, my students, or my teaching context, nor is she/he invested in any of these. My cooperating teacher, my field supervisor, and my professors are the ones who best understand me, my students, my teaching context, my teaching skills, and my growth over time. (Chiu, 2014, p. 28)

Often the resource expenditures associated with the assessment are a concern. Teacher candidates must pay $300 to submit their portfolio for official scoring and another $100 for individual task retakes (Pearson Incorporated, 2013). Denton (2013) demonstrated the

implications of the edTPA on liberal arts colleges. He stated, "There may be more implications for liberal arts colleges of teacher education. Liberal arts education emphasizes the importance of individuals, community, and shared responsibility" (p. 20). Denton also expressed the high stake features of the edTPA may encourage use of curriculum strategies or preparation methods misaligned with the goal of earning a passing score on individual rubrics opposed to preparing novice teachers for successful careers.

According to SCALE and AACTE (2015a) the long term expectation is the edTPA will be adopted throughout the United States as a mandatory requirement for all teacher candidates to complete the assessment for teacher licensure. This expectation includes all institutions of higher education, state education boards, and professional standard boards throughout the nation. The informational edTPA website managed by the AACTE (2015b), http://edtpa.aacte.org/faq, indicated as of July of 2015, 12 states have either adopted statewide policies or are actively considering requiring the edTPA as a performance assessment for aspiring teachers, over 600 education preparation programs in 40 states and the District of Columbia, have chosen to use the edTPA for candidate approval and/or licensure.

Considering the range of tensions and dilemmas that often arise in implementing any reform initiatives, and the scale of which the edTPA is being implemented, this mix of anticipation and skepticism is to be expected. As scholars and educators learn more about performance assessments and the effects of performance assessments, a reexamination of how teacher education programs are structured and how teacher educators are providing the means for teacher candidates to become effective, highly qualified teachers will continue to be a priority in teacher education.

Teacher Education

Prior to the 1830's, teachers were mostly master artisans who were also doctors, clergy, and businessmen, rather than a trained teacher. With the growth of the nation and many children needing school, the common school was formed. Common schools offered more structure than its predecessor and looked very similar to the model of education today. Common schools were operated by local public officials, which made teachers public employees normally hired by a board acting as an agent of the community (Labaree, 2007). The criterion for hiring teachers was wide-ranging. Sedlak (1989) explained that one of the most important characteristics of a teacher was the ability to manage and control the classroom. Over time it was recognized that teachers needed more preparation, far beyond the completion of the academic level each teacher was teaching. The first efforts to organize the formal preparation of teachers in the United States were led by James Carter, Horace Mann, and Henry Barnard. Each of these men were strong advocates for teacher education (Labaree, 2007). Within the common schools, teachers taught students during the school year and underwent eight weeks of professional development to build teaching skills (Mattingly, 1975). These summer institutes constituted the inception of teacher education.

The common school movement produced a demand for teachers, and developed a need for higher teacher qualifications. The move from an ad hoc mode of delivery to a systematic form required the public certification of teachers. This need for certification enabled the need for normal schools. The goal of a normal school was to formulate a team of professionally skilled, well-educated teachers, who could serve as models to all public school teachers across the country and fulfill the need for teachers. The conflict during this time was a battle between the levels of quality of teacher education versus the amount of teachers that could be produced

quickly. Unfortunately, normal school leaders chose relevance over rigor (Labaree, 2007).

This choice to mass-produce teachers continued at the university level as well. The elite universities generally opted for rigorous training over filling the demand for more teachers, but regional state universities—the heirs of normal schools—chose to fill the large need for teachers (Labaree, 2007). This tension between rigor and market response can still be seen today. Labaree (2007) stated, "Teacher education has ceded control over its professional programs, cooperated in undermining the professional quality of these programs, and allowed these programs to become marginalized within a university setting that grants them little respect" (p. 304). Interestingly, one of the main discussions in education for the past 20 years has been the recognition for the need of quality teachers, which had been disregarded in the age of mass teacher preparation. With the recent trend and call for quality teachers (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2012), it seems as if the pendulum is swinging from market response back toward rigor.

Teacher education began nearly two centuries ago and since its inception it has been continuously researched, criticized, and improved. Darling-Hammond (2010b) stated, "For teacher education, this is perhaps the best of times and the worst of times" (p. 35). She claimed teacher education is at the best of times because of the great amount of progress teacher education has made in the past two decades. Examples of the successful transformations made in teacher education include, creating stronger clinical practice, strengthening coursework in areas like student learning and development, assessment, subject matter pedagogy, and teaching of English language learner and special needs students, and connecting this coursework directly to practice in more developed practicum settings. On the contrary though, Darling-Hammond addressed there are so many "forces in the environment that conspire to undermine these efforts"

(p. 35). Some of those forces include, the redefinition of teacher qualifications and teacher certification, the introduction to replacing traditional elements of licensure, certification and accreditation, and the privatization of education (Darling-Hammond, 2010b). These forces are often driven by reform or nationwide efforts to address teacher education and suggest proposals for the teaching profession.

The quality and appropriateness of teacher education programs have long been topics of discussion amongst academic, professional, political circles and well as in the media. The education of pre service teachers has been under a great amount of scrutiny. In 1985, the American Association of Colleges and Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Carnegie Forum released its agenda for wide-ranging improvements in its publication, *A Call for Change in Teacher Education.* The reports covered five issues written as a response to the 1983 report on American public education called *A Nation at Risk*. The five issues include, supply and demand for quality teachers, content of teacher education programs, accountability for teacher education, resource requirements for teacher education programs, and conditions necessary to support the highest quality of teaching (U.S. & National Institute of Education., 1985). In 1986, a collection of deans from schools of education from leading universities in the country formed the Holmes Group. Together this organization released a report entitled *Tomorrow's Teachers,* which called for better preparation in the liberal arts and academic majors and for moving teacher certification courses to the master's degree level. As mentioned above, in 1987, the NBPS was established offering the prospect of higher certification status for teachers through the National Board Certification test (Ornstein & Levine, 2006).

Rita Kramer's (1991) book entitled *Ed School Follies; The Miseducation of America's Teachers,* described a drastic belief that all schools of education should be closed. Similarly,

Dean of Education, Donald Steadman recommended a serious restructuring of teacher education to replace the current bureaucratic approach with a flexible interdisciplinary approach (Noll, 2010). In 1998, the AACTE encouraged teacher education programs to pursue national accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NCATE (recently renamed the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP]) has set standards specifying courses to be taken and faculty qualifications for teaching those courses (NCATE, 2011).

Of greater impact, the formation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became an integral part of the national school reform movement for education and teacher education. The requirements for NCLB are quite lengthy. In a 2003 U.S. Department of Education document, the NCLB "represents a sweeping overhaul of federal efforts to support elementary and secondary education" and "sets the goal of having every child making the grade on state defined education standards by the end of 2013-2014 school year" (p. 3). As a part of the overhaul, NCLB outlined the minimum requirements of teachers and communicates a plan for all teachers of core academic subjects to be highly qualified. Under NCLB any new teacher must be a "highly qualified teacher" (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 12) which includes having a bachelor's degree, full state certification and licensure as defined by the state, and demonstrated competency by "passing a rigorous state test on subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading or language arts, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum" (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 12). New middle school and high school teachers can demonstrate competency "either by passing a rigorous state test in each subject they teach, or by holding an academic major, an advanced degree, or advanced certification or credentials" (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 12).

Another more recent answer to educational reform was brought forward by the Obama administration called the Race To The Top (RttT). Its focus was mainly on PreK-12 education, but identified the improvement of teacher quality as one of the most important educational issues. The teacher education components of RttT requires students' achievement be linked to their teacher's education programs showing they can produce teachers who raise the achievement levels of their students (Wiseman, 2012). Aside from federal pressures on teacher education, the recent unification of two accreditation agencies NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) has emerged, creating policies requiring teacher education programs to redesign their programs to meet the newly created accreditation standards. Candidate selectivity, success in content area learning, time spent in clinical experiences, and impact on PreK-12 students' achievement are examples of data points required in the accreditation process (Wiseman, 2012).

State and federal agencies have placed a new level of intense scrutiny on teacher education. Wang, Odell, Klecka, Spalding, and Lin (2010) stated that teacher education reform has become an international trend with much of the focus being on quality of teaching. They stated, "Central to the quality of teaching are teachers' deep understanding of what they need to teach and the pedagogical practices that can be used to represent such understanding to students" (p. 395). Unfortunately, decades of research on quality teaching and teacher education and multiple volumes of teaching policy have not yielded a conclusive approach (Wang, Lin, Spalding, Klecka, & Odell, 2011). Some scholars have proposed the attempt to identify quality teaching as challenging, because quality teaching in one cultural context may differ from or even contradict quality teaching in other contexts (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005).

Additionally, Wang et al. (2010) are under the impression that teacher education reform

cannot be successful without understanding the contexts in which educational reform is situated. Sykes, Bird, and Kennedy (2010) explained three kinds of dilemmas teacher educators face with reform. The first dilemma is teaching is an internally differentiated occupation. Teachers conform to cultural scripts preserving past practices more than the pursuit of new ideals and equity. The second dilemma is the limitations on teacher education programs. Teacher educators have modest resources and the institutions developing teachers are divided from the field of practice. The final dilemma is the lack of consistency between teacher candidates' placements, what they learned in their programs, and what they experienced in clinical practice (Sykes et al., 2010).

With the growing amount of research indicating that the most important factor in terms of student achievement is the teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goldhaber, 2007; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Wiens, 2013) it is understandable that policy makers, educators, and government leaders alike have been strategizing with teacher quality, what it looks like, how to achieve it, and how to measure it (Goodwin et al., 2014). Amidst the heightened attention to the teaching profession for high quality teachers, very little is being said about the quality of those who teach teachers—teacher educators (Goodwin et al., 2014). Loughran (2014) expressed his concern about the level of quality in teacher education as he questioned the professional development completed or available in teacher education. Loughran argued, "it has only been in recent times that the notion of professional development of teacher education has begun to emerge as a touchstone for not only what it means to become, but also to learn as a teacher educator" (p. 271). Professional development for a teacher educator is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of students' growth (Avalos, 2011).

Goodwin et al. (2014) offered some good questions that may help teacher educators understand where to begin when it comes to professional development. They asked:

(a) What should teachers know, and what should their preparation entail? (b) What do current teacher educators consider to be the foundation elements of their practice? (c) How do they evaluate their own preparation in these areas? (d) How do their experiences inform the preparation of future teacher educators? (p. 285)

Professional development is needed for individual teacher educators or teacher preparation programs as a whole to withstand many of the new accountability measures required of teacher preparation programs. According to Bates, Swennen, and Jones (2011), professional development of teacher educators is a topic that has been omitted from scholarly research and explores the need to systematically and critically look at the professional development of teacher educators.

Historically, teacher preparation programs have been evaluated primarily on the components of the preparation program itself. Teacher preparation programs evaluate themselves based on the required coursework, the faculty who teach the courses, the types of courses offered, and the experiences teacher candidates receive (Henry, Kershaw, Zulli, & Smith, 2012). Traditionally, the primary form of evaluation has been through the application of standards of national accrediting organizations, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2010). Newer models of accountability from state and federal policies like Race to the Top (RttT), change the way in how teacher educators are held accountable. For example, RttT called for:

Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs.

(i) Link student achievement and student growth…data to the students' teachers, and

principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and

principals were prepared for credentialing, and publicly report the data for each

credentialing program in the State; and (ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options

and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals. (U.S.

Department of Education, 2010, p. 19504-5)

Professional development of teacher educators must be meaningful, purposefully

conceptualized, and thoughtfully implemented. Zeichner (2005) recommended teacher educators

engage in a self-study of their craft. Teacher educators need to think deeply about their role and

critique their own practice as they ask their candidates to do. Zeichner also recommended that

teacher educators need to be in tune with the conceptual and empirical literature in teacher

education. Education is an evolving field continually requiring teacher educators to engage in

dialogue and research with each other to mine the complexities within the field.

The Complexities of Teacher Education

It is well documented in the literature that teaching is a very complex profession (Council

of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2010a; Roth, Masciotra, &

Boyd, 1999; Wiens, 2013). Common sense would indicate that teaching teachers—teacher

educators are working within an equally complex profession (Bates et al., 2011; Gallagher,

Griffin, Parker, Kitchen, & Figg, 2011; Goodwin et al., 2014; Loughran, 2014; Wang et al.,

2010). And, as the demands, expectations, and requirements of teachers increase, the same can

be said for teacher educators. Teaching teachers is becoming increasingly more difficult,

demanding and complex, with very little guidance being offered (Loughran, 2014) and with very

little preparation from the start (Goodwin et al., 2014). "Teacher education is complex work

involving curriculum, pedagogy and research, yet most teacher educators are provided with little

professional development support or mentoring in most teacher education programs" (Gallagher et al., 2011, p. 880).

Traditional teacher education programs are often built of very similar formats. They include, general education coursework, subject area courses, pedagogical courses, and field experiences (Murray, 2008). Teacher education programs also have a variety of differences. Some of those differences include; their own conceptual framework, (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002) the course requirements required from the state (Constantine et al., 2009), their own language (Grossman & McDonald, 2008), and their own measurement of the teachers abilities (Wiens, 2013).

Consequently, the esteem of the profession adds to the complexity. "Teacher education has long suffered from low status. Everyone picks on it: professors, reformers, policymakers, and teachers; right wing think tanks and left wing think tanks" (Labaree, 2007, p. 297). The lack of esteem may be explained by the lack of preparation of teacher educators. Goodwin et al. (2014) questioned what teacher educators should know and do, and found teacher educators are ill prepared to do the work prescribed for them.

These complexities continue to increase with the amount of mandates and reform teacher educators undergo from year to year. One of the more current mandates being addressed in this study is the requirement for some teacher education programs to implement the principals of the edTPA throughout their entire program. I am interested in learning how different university faculty members who teach in a teacher preparation program navigate through the complexities of new reform mandates, specifically the edTPA. I will seek to confirm what Loughran (2014) stated when he said:

The work of teacher education is not about "upskilling" staff to perform in new ways in response to mandated changes in curriculum, policy or practice, it is about an ongoing process of learning, development, and change driven by the players central to that work—teacher educators. (p. 273)

Learning a new teacher performance assessment like the edTPA is one of many challenges teacher education has to offer. As more is learned about the effects of the edTPA, teacher educators will need to continually reexamine the way their programs are structured, and continually assess if they are providing the means for teacher candidates to become effective, highly qualified teachers. The edTPA is intended to be educational for candidates and programs to support student learning in diverse contexts and to provide essential evidence to inform licensure and program decisions. SCALE (2014) stated:

Our research and experience demonstrate that teacher preparation programs need time to develop faculty capacity to support candidates, to inform candidates about revised requirements for program completion and licensure, and to create an organizational infrastructure to ensure effective implementation on the edTPA. (p. 1)

Consequently, as with any mandated reform, there is a large learning curve for the faculty and instructors to prepare for the implementation of the edTPA as well as with the teacher candidates.

The 2013 edTPA field test reported 58% of the teacher candidates who took the edTPA in 2013 would have passed the edTPA based on the national cut score of 42 recommended by the national standard-setting committee (edTPA, 2013). A result of 42% of teacher candidates failing the edTPA during student teaching, the final semester before graduation, may be a concern for teacher preparation programs and curriculum changes may be deemed necessary by

teacher educators and curriculum leaders to ensure a higher passing rate for their teacher candidates.

SCALE (2014) offered many recommendations to teacher education programs to support teacher candidates. Some of the main curricular changes may include: (a) formative opportunities through extended clinical placements, opportunities to plan curriculum units, and practice in evaluating student learning to inform teaching; (b) plans for acquiring and supporting the use of technology required for implementing the assessment; (c) implementation plans of readiness activities enabling all involved parties to understand and support edTPA appropriately for teacher candidates; (d) plans for embedding the edTPA's three major tasks—planning, instruction, and assessment, the three pillars of effective teaching; (e) utilizing the guides and documentation like the *Making Good Choices* document, content specific handbooks, templates, and rubrics (SCALE, 2014).

The edTPA uses and requires teacher candidates to understand and use a documented professional language as they prepare each commentary and as they complete their learning segment. As teacher education programs redesign their curriculum to infuse the components of the edTPA, one of the major components necessary is to imbed academic language as determined by the edTPA assessment. Academic language is one of the more challenging elements of the edTPA, because it applies unfamiliar and vague terminology to basic elements of grammar and language instruction. The academic language in the edTPA can be sorted into three demands: (a) language function, (b) vocabulary, and (c) discourse or syntax. Since the edTPA emphasizes speaking and writing over other forms of communication, teacher educators and teacher candidates need to stress its uses and begin to utilize the same language during instruction (edTPA, n.d.; SCALE, 2014). Consequently, teacher educators will need to learn the

language necessary, to not only teach it to teacher candidates, but to also begin using the language within the teacher preparation program. As teacher educators develop a deeper understanding of the edTPA and how it connects with the preparation coursework and field experiences it will help them make the necessary changes to the curriculum and the teacher preparation program they oversee.

Another challenge teacher educators will have to examine is how the completion of the edTPA fits within the schedule of student teaching (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). Teacher candidates are tasked with acclimating themselves to their classroom, learning each of the students and the level in which each student can perform, learning the curriculum, learning the classroom routines, completing necessary student teaching responsibilities and planning and completing the edTPA. Understanding this level of appropriate acclimation, teacher educators will need to help gauge and assist each teacher candidate, and help them recognize when the best time for a teacher candidate to complete the edTPA during the student teaching experience. Teacher candidates will need to calibrate themselves to their teaching placement, take on the demands of student teaching, plan and complete the edTPA, and then submit it within the proper submission window for the assessment to be scored and returned to the teacher education program prior to graduation.

edTPA

In the fall 2013 the edTPA declared itself fully operational and ready for use across the country. It is the first standards-based assessment and has been adopted by institutions in 35 different states (http://edtpa.aacte.org). However, at the time of this writing, the amount of literature on the edTPA was scarce. In September, 2015a, Dover et al. stated, "The research on the edTPA is in its infancy and has not kept pace with its statewide implementation" (p. 3). As

what would be expected, studies on this new nationally available assessment have taken on different forms in the literature. The impact of the edTPA, and the range of opinion is widespread. The majority of the literature on the edTPA centers around three main areas, the assessment itself (discussed earlier in this chapter), its impact on teacher education, and its impact on pre-service teachers. Even though the three areas will contain applicable information to the proposed project, there is no relevant literature that is exactly matched to the current study of the preparation of faculty for edTPA implementation. However, the three areas based on the edTPA discussed demonstrated challenges, obstacles, and differences of opinion that may affect teacher preparation programs and the faculty who oversee them.

Some of the first reports on the edTPA have questioned the preparation and readiness of teacher education for an assessment like the edTPA (Knight et al., 2014; Sato, 2014). Knight et al. (2014) posed a number of questions and invited research and conceptual articles that questioned the validation standards of measures used in teacher performance assessments. Sato (2014) answered Knight et al. (2014), questioning whether teacher educators or the field of education are prepared to agree "on a common conception of teaching that underlies performance expectance for teaching" (p. 433). Sato (2014) also inquired if there is a "core body of knowledge and skills that teachers ought to know and be able to demonstrate through performance before receiving a teaching license" (p. 421)? Her discussion enhances our understanding of the relationship between the edTPA and major traditions in teaching and the criticisms of those who do not support the edTPA (Knight et al., 2014). Similarly, Lewis and Young (2013) include the edTPA as one component within the political dimension of teacher education accountability policy. Their warning to educators considers the ways that teacher

education is being developed politically and cautions the partiality and distortion of teacher education may become less effective and salutary (Lewis & Young, 2013).

Multiple studies have been produced to share what their individual campus or multiple campuses have learned during pilot phases or from early implementation (Adkins et al., 2015; Baptiste, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; Girtz, 2014; Wetherington, 2013). Two different studies indicate that the edTPA process strengthens their practice as teacher educators (Adkins et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013) and have a role within teacher education programs (Baptiste, 2012). Another study explored how teacher candidates from two different programs scored on the edTPA and compared those scores to the passing scores from fully implemented states, New York and Washington (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). Miller et al. (2015) add to the literature describing how an interdisciplinary faculty team answer the question, "What developmentally appropriate practices can support teacher candidates' abilities to success with the edTPA while maintaining sight of the broader goals for teachers' professional preparation" (p. 38)?

There have been a number of studies that have investigated the impact of the edTPA on pre-service teachers. Denton (2013) shares helpful strategies for candidates to be more successful in passing the edTPA. Since his institution was one of the first to pilot the edTPA, he was the first to track the individual successes of his candidates and relayed those strategies while warning others to not misalign their program with the edTPA by "teaching to the test" (Denton, 2013). Meuwissen et al.'s (2015) study examined teacher candidates' perceptions with and experiences with the edTPA. They examine the consequential rollout of the edTPA and compared New York and Washington in their implementation process. According to Meuwissen et al. individual states and programs would be better suited to follow a similar implementation

process as the institutions in Washington, than in New York. Conley and Garner's (2015) article titled, *The edTPA and The (De)Skilling of America's Teachers?,* examines a variety of ways the state mandates and local contexts create conditions for a narrowing of visions for teacher preparation. The authors offer advice on how programs can increase the potential for edTPA to improve teacher preparation, as opposed to de-skilling teachers (Conley & Garner, 2015).

Teacher educators have a range of opinions in regards to the edTPA (Sawchuk, 2013). As expected with any large scale, high stakes, national reform initiative, there are many who are critical of the adoption of the edTPA. One of the first stances in opposition pointed to the edTPA as an imposition on teacher education and a limiter of opportunities of teaching and learning, and of academic freedom among teacher educators (Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013). Madeloni and Gorlewski (2013) expressed that teacher educators were focusing more attention on writing to the rubric's specific requirements than the normal conversations that took place in the past. They expressed how the mandates or the essentials of the edTPA were "stealing the soul of their work and preventing them from modeling critical pedagogy" (Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013, p. 21).

In another study, Dover et al. (2015a) caution the high stakes nature and the standardization of edTPA nationwide. Considering the policies and profit that are created with the implementation of the edTPA they argued the need of more scholarship regarding the impact of the assessment (Dover et al. 2015a). Singer (2015) also criticized the edTPA indicating multiple problematic areas with the use of the edTPA. He indicated that the length of the assessment takes away from the student teaching experience, he questioned the reliability and validity of the assessment, and the use of similar curriculum between candidates and their ability to work together and help each other on the assessment. Lastly, he raised similar questions as

Dover et al. (2015b) when he questioned the outsourcing of tutors and the possibilities of those companies undermining teacher education while attempting to help teacher candidates successfully pass the edTPA (Singer, 2015). Hochstetler (2014) questioned the edTPA's lack of ability to examine the dispositions of the teacher candidates. Her stance explained that dispositions make a difference in teacher effectiveness and the sustainability of our profession and is a critical component missing in the assessment (Hochstetler, 2014).

Within the literature there are also several advocates of the edTPA who continue to push for its use and expansion nationally. SCALE, the creators and overseers of the edTPA, with the help of AACTE have naturally added to the literature as proponents to help inform the educational community on the current status of the edTPA. Through the use of the 2013 edTPA Field Test and the 2014 Administrative Report, ongoing formal reports on the design, the development, and the validity of the edTPA have been published (AACTE, 2015c; edTPA, 2013; SCALE 2014a). Sharon Robinson (2014), current president of AACTE, wrote that the development of the edTPA has an opportunity to strengthen teacher education programs and build stronger relationships within the P-12 setting.

Mehta and Doctor (2013), supporters of the edTPA, indicated its potential to "raise the bar" in teacher preparation. Lynn (2014) added to the literature when he indicated the edTPA better prepares teacher candidates to better serve minority males and underserved populations. Adkins et al. (2015) each explained that the implementation of the edTPA has brought a significant amount of improvement to each of their teacher education programs. Peck et al. (2014) claim that standardized teaching performance assessments are "uniquely valuable with respect to the role that they can play both in motivating and guiding concrete actions aimed at program improvement" (p. 9).

Whether proponents or critics of the edTPA, scholars on both sides indicated the adoption and implementation of the edTPA does not come without its challenges. Common challenges include, (a) preparing and supporting candidates for success (Denton, 2013; Girtz, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Metzler, 2014; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014), (b) funding needed to ensure teacher preparation programs are prepared to meet edTPA requirements and establish that the new certification requirements are integrated into courses and learning activities (Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014), (c) preparing cooperating teachers to better understand the edTPA and requirements for student teachers completing the assessment (Miller et al., 2015), (d) increased demands with curriculum while contact time with teacher candidates stays the same (Girtz, 2014), and (e) professional development and the preparation of the faculty that is focused on edTPA's technical aspects as well as its larger vision (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Miller et al., 2015).

After a review of the literature the only study paralleling the proposed study is Peck et al.'s (2010) research that negotiates the implementation of the edTPA's predecessor, the PACT. Their qualitative study included 35 full time and part time teacher education program faculty from one program. Of those faculty and staff 15 were invited to participate as key informants through the study. Those individuals were selected to represent a broad range of roles and experience levels within the program, including course instructors, field supervisors, and the coordinators within the teacher education program. Their study noted the substantial changes in the way that the program operated including: (a) increased engagement of faculty and staff in new forms of joint activity, (b) increased alignment of concepts and practices across program experiences, and (c) the re-imagination and clarification of program identity (Peck et al., 2010).

The issues teacher educator's face in the field in regards to the increasing demands of the

edTPA are well documented. Those demands include, (a) the professional readiness to support candidates (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Hyler, n.d.; Loughran, 2014; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014), (b) the need to revise or update the program to include edTPA components (Adkins et al., 2015; Caughlan & Jiang, 2014; Miller et al., 2015), and (c) develop instruction strategies to teach edTPA components that are not misaligned (Denton, 2013). As previously stated, there is no study that has examined how institutions, individual states, or educational stakeholders prepare teacher educators or colleges of education for the edTPA. At the time of this writing the literature does not indicate how individual teacher education faculty perceive the edTPA, nor does it indicate best practices for edTPA implementation. In a review of the literature there has been no empirical research completed on the preparation of faculty as they implement the edTPA in their program. This proposed study will allow the voices of university faculty in teacher education to be heard and will help promote a better understanding of the preparations and implementation processes for the edTPA.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the literature for a qualitative study on faculty preparation for the implementation of the edTPA. At the beginning of the chapter, pedagogical content knowledge was reviewed to provide the theoretical framework for the study. Teaching is a complex profession requiring a wide range of skills and knowledge (Bates et al., 2011; Roth et al., 1999; Wiens, 2013). Teachers must have a deep understanding of pedagogy, subject area knowledge and the unique pedagogical tools most appropriate for teaching a given subject (Shulman, 1987). Good teachers have a thorough knowledge of the established curriculum and enact the curriculum in ways that make it accessible for their students (Thorton, 2008).

Additionally good teachers make solid instructional decisions and implement appropriate models of instruction for the curricular material (Estes, Mintz, & Gunter, 2011).

The complexities of teaching make the creation and implementation of performance assessments difficult. Therefore, training pre-service teachers to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of effective teaching is equally complex as teaching itself. Teacher education programs are tasked with training young teachers in continually changing contexts. In the next part of this chapter, the essentialism philosophy was reviewed to provide an understanding for the direction teacher educators may go in the preparation of teacher candidates for teacher performance assessments. To meet and keep up with the demands of the profession, teacher educators may turn toward the essentialist way of teaching by only focusing on the essentials determined to help teacher candidates break into the profession.

Recently, many different initiatives have been implemented to assist the field of education with these complexities of teaching by providing instruments that can differentiate between different levels of performance while being consistent across settings and contexts. In the middle of this chapter the evolution of the teacher performance assessment was reviewed. This review includes: (a) Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support and Training Program, (b) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (otherwise known as National Board Certification), (c) Teacher Performance Assessment, (d) Performance Assessment of California Teachers and (e) the Education Teacher Performance Assessment. Other complex initiatives measuring teaching that were not reviewed in this chapter include: (a) an administrative evaluation based on the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ, 2012); (b) teacher evaluations based the Danielson Framework (Danielson, 1996); (c) the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Pianta, LaParo, & Hambre, 2008); (d) the InTASC Model Core Teaching

Standards, created from the Council of Chief of State School Officers (CCSSO, 2011); and (e) the Teacher Work Sample developed by a consortium of teacher education schools called the Renaissance Group (Henning & Robinson, 2004).

Many of the above mentioned initiatives may begin to guide teacher education programs to begin to develop a common language, and a common standardized measurement of teacher candidates. From these initiatives the larger use of the essentialism philosophy may be adopted from teacher educators. Just as teachers teach only the necessities students are required to know to pass certain tests, teacher educators may react the same way to help teacher candidates fulfill what is necessary to successfully pass the measured assessment with less concern about a novice teachers' true level of preparedness.

After the review of the assessments that led to the edTPA, the next portion of this chapter showed the history and background of teacher education. Teacher education programs can play a significant role in training teacher candidates to more successfully impact student learning (Konold et al., 2008). As teacher education is required to take on the above-mentioned initiatives, it is necessary for teacher educators themselves to go through proper training and preparation. It is recommended that teacher educator programs adjust the content area coursework (AACTE, 2015b; SCALE, 2013) and pedagogical coursework (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007; Shulman, 1987; Zeichner, 2005) because of the critical role these factors have in preparing teachers to pass the required assessments and become effective teachers. Given the importance university faculty have in traditional teacher preparation programs, the empirical and theoretical support behind the faculty preparations to implement a major change in their program to a new assessment model, warrants additional study.

This chapter reviewed the complexities of teacher education. Recently there has been a call to the literature for understanding the complexities of teaching teachers and the need for teacher educators to undergo professional development (Bates et al., 2011; Loughran, 2014). Research does not indicate which pathway to teaching is most effective at preparing pre-service teachers for the demands in the classroom (Constantine et al., 2009). Neither does it indicate which pathway to teaching pre-service teachers is most effective.

Finally, the last portion of this chapter reviewed the literature and the current status of the edTPA. It indicates a gap in the literature pertaining to the preparations and the implementation processes university faculty members go through to prepare pre-service teachers for the teaching profession.

CHAPER THREE: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of university faculty expected to implement the edTPA within a teacher preparation program. This chapter outlines the methods that were used to carry out this transcendental phenomenological study, including the design rationale, the central and attendant questions to the study, participant information, setting, research procedures, researcher's role, and a descriptive overview of the data collection process, as well as, the analysis of the data. Finally, the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations will be addressed.

Design

A qualitative, transcendental phenomenological design was used for this research as it explores university faculty and their experiences with the implementation of the edTPA. Phenomenology is about capturing and synthesizing the core of something experienced by a group of people. In other words it is a methodology that helps one understand the meanings of human experiences and explores the essence of a phenomenon of that human experience. The human experience I captured was a first person point of view of teacher educators who have been impacted by the edTPA. I then synthesized the successes, the challenges, and the thoughts of how this new assessment is impacting university faculty and their teacher preparation program. A transcendental phenomenological approach was used to "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). Transcendental phenomenology is a rigorous, human science based primarily on the work of Edmund Husserl, (1913) who suggests to investigate the way knowledge comes into being and clarifies all assumptions upon which understanding is grounded.

From the descriptions made by the participants, the meaning of the experience was derived to fully understand the essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). This approach allowed the university faculty to express their thoughts and feelings about their experience and brought meaning to the phenomenon. While opinions can be learned from quantitative research, using such a technique would limit the opportunity to focus on the "wholeness of the experience" as described by the participants. Instead, this study searched for "meanings and essences of experience, rather than measurement and explanations" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 21).

A transcendental phenomenological approach was appropriate for my study because it allowed me to study the experience and then interpret the situation where the experience occurred (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) stated, "In phenomenological research, the question grows out of an intense interest in a particular problem or topic" (p. 104). I chose phenomenology for this study because the experiences of faculty to be understood, a collective voice from multiple universities needed to be heard. Other methods would not allow for the broad voice that is needed to understand this phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) stated,

> Phenomenology, step by step attempts to eliminate everything that represents a prejudgment, setting aside presuppositions, and reaching a transcendental state of freshness and openness, a readiness to see in an unfettered way, not threatened by the customs, beliefs, and prejudices of normal science, but the habits of the natural world or by knowledge based on reflected everyday experience. (p. 41)

Knowledge is rooted in meaning, and phenomenology is the accepted process of understanding that knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). Knowledge was gained from multiple experiences ranging from emotion, thought, perception, desire, memory, imagination, and my phenomenological study researched the structure of those experiences.

Research Questions

The study used this central question to guide the research. What stories do university faculty have to tell about their experiences with preparing and implementing the edTPA into their teacher preparation program?

Four attendant questions also guided this study:

1. How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

2. What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?

3. What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

4. How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perception, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

Setting

The setting for this study took place at three universities in a Midwestern state. For the purpose of confidentiality, pseudonyms are used for the names of the universities in the study. Participants from Inverness University, River Valley University, and Stonebridge University were involved in this study. The institutions chosen for this study are similar in many ways. Inverness University is a four-year private institution with approximately 4,900 undergraduate and graduate students, River Valley University is a four-year private university with approximately 3,350 undergraduate and graduate students, and Stonebridge University is a four-year private university with approximately 3,500 undergraduate and graduate students. The university faculty from these universities were chosen, because they are each under the same state requirements in implementing the edTPA, they each have teacher education programs, and they are within a convenient driving distance.

Participants

Purposive sampling was used to identify the participants for this study. Creswell (2013) defined this type of sample as one where all participants meet the same criteria. Purposive sampling was used to ensure all participants have the ability to share their experiences on preparing and implementing the edTPA. More specifically, criterion sampling was used to make sure all of the participants have experienced the phenomenon and were able to provide a descriptive account of their experiences (Creswell, 2013). The ideal criteria for the faculty participants included the following: (a) University faculty member who has held a position in a graduate or undergraduate teacher preparation program the past three years, in a state where the edTPA will be required for licensure, and (b) University faculty member who has participated in the preparation and implementation of the edTPA for their teacher preparation program.

The same set of participants was used throughout the entire data collection process. Faculty were not deselected based on gender, age, race or other criteria. Moustakas (1994) provided the following reasoning for participant selection:

> The essential criteria include: the research participant has experienced the phenomenon, is intensely interested in understanding its nature and meanings, is willing to participate in a lengthy interview, and (perhaps a follow-up interview), grants the investigator the right to tape-record, possibly videotape the interview, and publish the data in a dissertation and other publications. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 107)

Scholars differ on the recommended number of participants needed for a phenomenological study. Creswell (2013) recommends 20-30 participants, while Patton (2002) states there is not a set number of participants needed for a phenomenological study. A common understanding for phenomenological studies is the sample size is sufficient when saturation is

reached. Saturation refers to the point where the researcher no longer learns anything new from the data collection (Seidman, 2006). The experiences of 12 faculty members were investigated and saturation was reached. Each of the faculty members participated with the questionnaire, the interview, and the focus groups. Prior to the interview sessions and focus group sessions a pilot interview was conducted with a university faculty member who was not selected as a participant, but did meet the criteria of the study. Ill-worded or misguided questions were revised.

Procedures

The first step in this study was to seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Because this research required the testing of human subjects from multiple universities, it was necessary to achieve IRB approval from Liberty University (See Appendix C). Next, I contacted the administrators from each institution and gained permission to complete my study using participants from their teacher preparation program. Once permissions were granted I sought help from a teacher education program administrator to assist with the recruiting of participants. This person assisted in snowball sampling, which helped me acquire the right participants for this study. According to Patton (2002) snowball sampling occurs when a participant in a study suggests others who would also meet the criteria for the study. A recruiting letter was sent to the potential participants of the study (See Appendix D).

Once the participants were identified an informed consent form (See Appendix E), a cover letter describing the study, and an electronic questionnaire link was sent via email to the participants (See Appendix F). Participation in the study was completely voluntary and no compensation was offered. Participants were given the opportunity to back out of the study at any time. Each participant was informed that the use of pseudonyms would be used throughout the study to ensure each person's privacy and the research will be available for them to review

prior to submission. I made it clear to the participants that I would uphold a high standard in academic integrity and use the data they provided for research purposes only. I also told them member checking would be used to allow them to review the research and validate the appropriate use of the data.

After the questionnaire was distributed and completed, a follow-up email was sent to arrange an interview time. Each of the interviews were held in person and the audio of each interview was captured using an iPad with an audio recording application (See Appendix G). At the end of each interview I asked each participant about their availability the following week for the focus group interview.

Focus groups were formed to allow the participants the opportunity to share and expound upon one another's answers. The focus group questions addressed general topics, such as, how the department prepared and implemented the edTPA (See Appendix H). The interviews on the other hand, asked individualized questions. During the interviews and focus group interviews, notes were taken and key words and interesting parts of each conversation were highlighted. The individual interviews and the focus group interviews were transcribed verbatim and all participants participated in member checking after receiving a copy of the transcript via email and were given the opportunity to verify for accuracy. There were a few word choice changes and minor transcription errors that were found necessary during the review.

Following the data collection and transcription, Moustakas's (1994) transcendental phenomenological framework was used for data analysis. The qualitative software program NVivo assisted me through the process of familiarizing and organizing the data, coding, merging, and re-working codes into significant themes to find the heart of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

The Researcher's Role

During the research I became a "human instrument" as described by Moustakas (1994). I interviewed and listened for a collective voice from university faculty from my state. Some of the participants were colleagues from the institution that I serve whom I have a working relationship with. Some of the participants are acquaintances whom I have met before at state conferences or workshops and I have a limited relationship with. Some of the participants I have never met prior to this study.

I am a former science and physical educational teacher for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. I was a vice principal at a middle school for one year and coached several sports at the middle school and high school level. Since 2011, I have been teaching in higher education, serving as an assistant professor in the School of Education teaching a variety of courses designed for undergraduate and graduate candidates. I serve my department as the technology coordinator and after beginning this project I was given the role as edTPA coordinator. I am also responsible for supervising multiple student teachers in elementary and middle school settings as a University Supervisor.

Personally, I have reservations about the high stakes of edTPA, but I believe the edTPA is an excellent instrument to assess and instruct novice teachers. From my perspective there are many benefits and challenges of how the edTPA is being implemented in my state. The benefits and challenges that come with the implementation of the edTPA were the catalyst for me to research this topic. I am passionate about teaching and helping future teacher candidates become quality teachers who influence their students in positive ways. I recognize the value in the edTPA and want to help both candidates and other faculty understand and use the assessment in the way it was designed.

Since I am the key instrument in this qualitative study, I must be aware of the dangers of bias on the study. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative researchers must be sure to bracket out his or her experiences in order to "take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination" (p. 60). The use of *epoche* as described by Moustakas (1994) required me to bracket or set aside positive and negative preconceived notions, judgments, and prejudices with regards to the research topic.

Data Collection

Data collection included an open-ended questionnaire, individual semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Each data type gave the study a higher level of dependability through triangulation. According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) triangulation is the use of multiple data sources as corroborative evidence for the validity of the study. In each of the collection stages, data were gathered until the phenomenon was thoroughly saturated (Creswell, 2013). I set a sequence to the order in which the data were researched to help build familiarization and understanding of the phenomenon. The sequence for data collection was questionnaire, interviews, and focus groups. The reasoning behind this sequence is explained below.
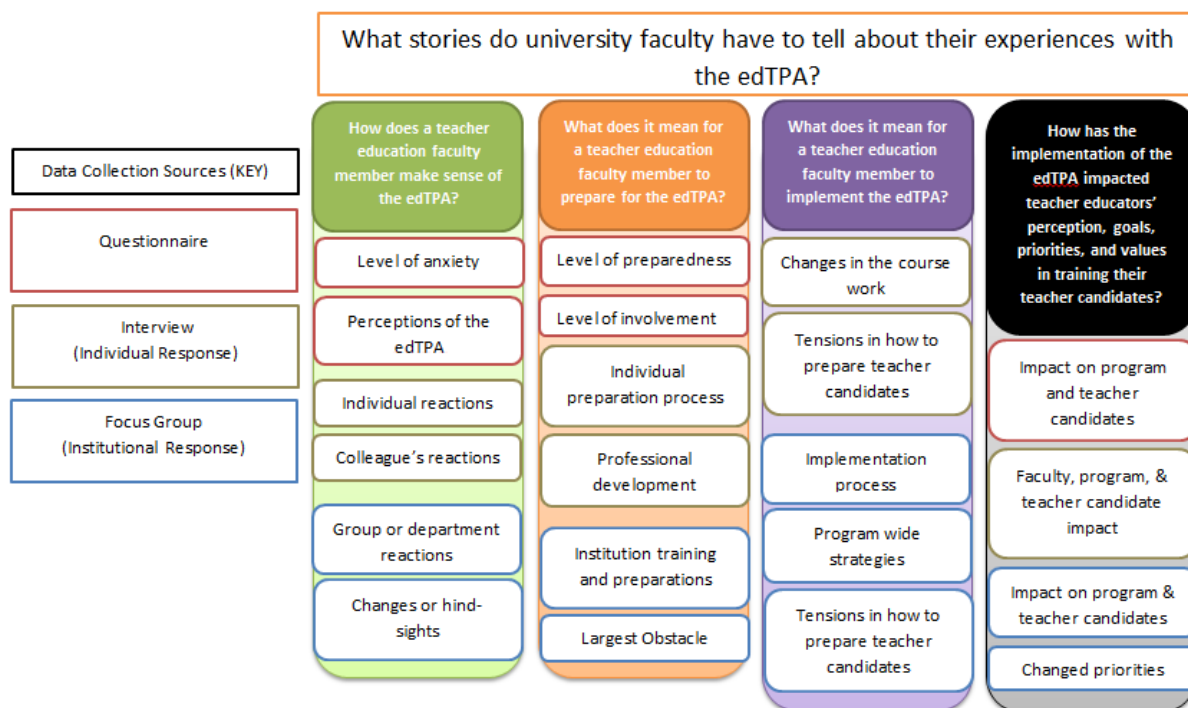
Figure 1. Data collection strategy

Open-ended questionnaire

"Questions and interviews are used extensively in educational research to collect data about phenomena that are not directly observable" (Gall et al., 2007, p. 228). The questionnaire developed for this study was guided by the eight steps in constructing and administering a research questionnaire by Gall et al. (2007). Those steps include: (a) defining research objectives, accomplished through my development of the research questions designed in my initial research plan; (b) selecting a sample, accomplished as participants are identified through each university's edTPA coordinator and/or networking within my state; (c) designing the questionnaire, will be completed with the help of the literature and then reviewed by peers; (d) pilot-testing the questionnaire, will address the face and content validity; (e) pre-contacting the sample and (f) writing a cover letter, will be accomplished simultaneously through the initial contact email providing the web link of the questionnaire; (g) following up with non-

respondents, taking place one week later, by re-sending the email with an added encouragement for those who have not yet responded to do so; (h) analyzing questionnaire data, accomplished when all questionnaires have been answered.

I created an electronic questionnaire participants could answer virtually. An electronic questionnaire was used due to its advantages over a pencil and paper questionnaire. Participants were not limited to time or space, postal costs were eliminated, missing data was reduced, and there was no need to transfer data manually. Errors or lost material was minimalized. The data from the electronic open-ended questionnaire had a dual purpose. The first purpose was used in the gathering of demographic data and learning the background of the participants. The second purpose was to better inform the researcher during the questioning during of the semi-structured interviews. When studying a phenomenon, it is important to understand the whole picture (Moustakas, 1994). Information from the questionnaire provided a snapshot of the participant pool and assisted the researcher in building layers of meaning while gaining a glimpse at the whole picture of the phenomenon (See Appendix F).

Interviews

The second method of data collection was individual semi-structured interviews scheduled and conducted with the participants who met the criterion made for the study. The interviews were a main source of the data and served a very specific purpose as described by Moustakas (1994), "it may be used as a means for exploring and gathering experiential narrative material that may serve as a resource for developing a richer and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon" (p. 66).

The interview questions were generated from and grounded in the literature and were developed to collect accounts of personal experiences, such as, anecdotes, stories, experiences,

incidents, etc. (Moustakas, 1994). Other questions were added in response to the questionnaire data received and provided further clarity or data. Prior to the interviews I piloted the interviews with a small sample to ensure clarity of questions and wording. The pilot interview revealed necessary revisions and deletions and increased the validity of the responses. It was also found that during the pilot that physical copies of the interview questions need to available to the participants so they can read the question as it was being asked. Interviews were set up using the protocol as discussed in Creswell (2013). The focus of the interviews was to capture the individual experiences of each participant. Many of the questions were geared in a way to understand how different faculty reacted, prepared, and implemented the edTPA.

During the interviews, I used an iPad and the iPad application Supernote, which recorded the audio of the entire conversation. The interviews ranged from 20 to 40 minutes in length.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

University Faculty Questions

How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

1. What were your thoughts when you first learned about the edTPA?

2. How did your colleagues handle the news about the new state requirement?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?

3. Walk me through the preparation process of the edTPA?

4. What steps of professional development did you take to learn about the edTPA?

5. What steps of professional development were offered by the University to help you prepare yourself to lead teacher candidates through the edTPA?

6. What has been the largest obstacle in preparing for the edTPA?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

7. What did you specifically do in your course work to prepare teacher candidates for the

   edTPA?

8. How did the implementation of the edTPA at your institution make you feel?

How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perception, goals,

priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

9. What impact has the edTPA made on you?

10. How has the edTPA affected your program?

11. What other stories you can tell me about the edTPA that may help me better

   understand the experience you went through?

Each of these questions were framed specifically to have participants share their stories

about the preparation and implementation of the edTPA. The first set of questions (Questions 1-

2) were addressing how a faculty member makes sense of the edTPA. Since the edTPA is a

relatively new assessment, it is understandable for a person to go through a familiarization

process (SCALE, 2013). Research indicated teacher education programs are using the new

mandates to revamp their program (Hyler, n.d.). Sawchuk (2013) has shown once teacher

educators familiarize themselves with the assessment, it changes their practice and improves

their teaching.

The second set of questions (Questions 3-6) attempt to find out what it means to prepare

for the edTPA. The preparations made to meet the demands of the edTPA vary. Some teacher

preparation programs redesigned their entire program to infuse the edTPA throughout the

coursework (Whitcomb, n.d.). Multiple sources stated that university faculty were preparing and

learning about edTPA alongside the teacher candidates (Margolis & Doring, 2013; Metzler,

2014; Wetherington, 2013; Wittenbrink, 2013). These questions also seek to find how each

faculty member prepared themselves professionally for the edTPA. Critics of the edTPA

expressed that the assessment may have been pushing teacher educators toward an early

retirement (Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013). Sawchuk (2013) indicated that the standardization of

the process diminishes the individual and distinct approaches teacher educators may normally

take.

The third set of questions (Questions 7, 8) speaks to understand how the edTPA was

implemented into the program. As stated above, some faculty see the need or are required to

redesign the course they teach allowing the components of the edTPA to be infused throughout

the coursework (Whitcomb, n.d.). Denton's (2013) study identified areas of the edTPA that can

be coached, indicating where teacher educators could misalign their teaching strategies to take

advantage of the standardization of the assessment.

The final set of questions (Questions 8-10) were used to find out more about the

participants perceptions, goals, priorities, and values and how the edTPA has impacted those

ideals. The literature shows the edTPA has made a significant impact on teacher education

programs and has strengthen their practice (Au, 2013; Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013).

Caughlan and Jiang (2014) stressed teacher educators to examine the instruments used in

performance assessments to define teaching and professionalism for their program. Girtz (2014)

stressed teacher educators to determine what it means in regards to ones institution's mission,

research, and purpose to take on a high stakes assessment. Proponents of the edTPA suggested it

will have a large impact on teacher educators and the profession (Darling-Hammond & Hyler,

2013; SCALE, 2013) and create a much needed dialogue amongst education professionals

(Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013).

Focus Groups

The third type of data were gathered through the use of focus groups. Using focus groups allowed me to observe the participants, while simultaneously noting their responses to the questions offered below. This type of data collection allows for recollection and will allow for the faculty members to expand upon one another's answers. Creswell (2013) stated:

Focus groups are advantageous when the interactions among interviewees will likely yield the best information, when interviewees are similar and cooperative with each other, when time to collect information is limited, and when individuals interviewed one-on-one may be hesitant to provide this information. (p. 133)

A focus group was held at each of the three universities and all four participants from each institution were able to attend. Each of the focus group interviews were recorded using the iPad and application Supernote and they were also video recorded through a webcam on a Mac laptop for ease of transcription and data collection. I personally led each of the focus groups. However, to prevent personal influence, I acted only as an observer during group conversations when opinions and personal experiences about preparing and implementing the edTPA are being shared. The focus of the focus groups was to capture the institutional preparation and implementation process. Many of the questions were geared in a way to understand the experiences of faculty from their different institutions.

Focus Group Questions

University Faculty Questions

How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

1. What were the first reactions from your department when you first learned about the consequential nature of the edTPA?

2. What do you know now you wish you had learned at first?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?

3. Walk me through your institution's preparation process?

4. How did your department go about training or preparing you (as a whole) for the edTPA?

5. What has been the largest obstacle for your program?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

6. Walk me though what implementing the edTPA has looked like for your program?

7. Explain how your program strategized on how to help your candidates pass the edTPA?

8. Some literature on the edTPA has illustrated how institutions may teach to the test or use a misaligned teaching strategies—what has your institution discussed regarding these topics?

How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perception, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

9. What impact has the edTPA made on your teacher preparation program?

10. What impact has the edTPA made on your teacher candidates?

11. What priorities have changed due to the edTPA in your department?

12. What advice would you have for another program who is just now learning about the edTPA?

14. What other stories you can tell me about the edTPA that may help me better understand the experience you went through?

Data Analysis

Data analysis began through the use of memoing, taking of detailed notes throughout the entire data collection process. Some recurring statements and key words became apparent while reviewing questionnaires and while interviewing participants, so I made note of them as they appeared. Memoing continued through the transcription process and review of each transcript. The data were organized with the help of NVivo, qualitative research software. The notes from the memoing were not collected and stored in NVivo, rather they were used as a reference while coding.

Responses from the questionnaires were scrutinized and transcription of each of the interviews was completed to archive direct quotes and allow for open coding. Open coding is the part of the analysis concerned with identifying, naming, categorizing and describing phenomena found in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Open coding was used to find patterns and themes from the data, including the memoing data, completed as the interviews and focus groups were being held. By creating a color code for key words or concepts, called clustering and thematizing, (Moustakas, 1994) allowed me to separate themes from each other, organize the data, and provide for a clearer analysis. Creswell (2013) recommended that one begins with 30 categories and reduces that number to five or six categories. Moustakas (1994) suggests using horizonalization which is seeing statements appear on what is thought as the horizon and when one disappears another becomes apparent.

According to Moustakas, (1994) the written responses, called textural descriptions, from the questionnaire and the transcription from the interviews will be analyzed and significant statements, sentences, quotes, or memos, which provide understanding of how the participants experienced the preparation for edTPA implementation will emerge. "Clusters of meaning"

(Moustakas, 1994, p. 121) from these significant statements were categorized into themes and interwoven into information gathered from the documentation analysis. Structure description analysis of the phenomenon uncovered the essence and meaning of the experience as individual structures are analyzed (Moustakas, 1994). I then considered how the descriptions relate to the phenomenon.

The final step of analysis, according to Moustakas, (1994) is the concept of synthesis. I asked, "How did one participant impact the theme? How does this participant's textual analysis influence the phenomenon, the collective voice, and create the essence?" Synthesizing the data provided a deeper understanding and allowed for clarity of the phenomena to be found in the data. Once the data analysis was complete I approached some of the participants a second time to validate the findings. No further data or insights were identified.

Trustworthiness

This research followed Guba's (1981) model in attempt to ensure trustworthiness during this research study. His four strategies for ensuring trustworthiness are: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. These strategies, guided me in completing a trustworthy study and providing readers of my study a means of assessing the value of the findings.

Credibility

Credibility was maintained in this research design by employing triangulation, member checking, and peer examination of the findings. Triangulation was completed through the use of questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. Triangulation is when the researcher uses multiple data collection sources and merge the different types of data to point to specific themes (Gall et al., 2007). In addition to triangulation, the use of member checking strengthens the credibility

for the research project. Member checking allowed for the participants to evaluate the credibility

of the textural structural description of the experiences or essence of the phenomenon. I shared

the "data analyses, interpretations, and conclusions" (Creswell, 2013, p. 208) of each

questionnaire, interview and the focus group data so each participant could offer feedback

concerning my findings.

Peer examinations were also employed to ensure credibility. It is fortunate that I have

many colleagues who work with doctoral candidates frequently and are familiar with scholarly

research using qualitative methods. Two of those individuals were utilized to check for veracity

of themes and the interpretation of statements in interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The use of

those individuals helped keep myself honest about the "methods, meaning, and interpretations"

(Creswell, 2013, p. 208) and helped to identify bias, to ensure the researcher's subjectivity does

mislead the findings of the study.

Transferability

In the attempt to capture the experience of each of the participants related to the

phenomena, special care was employed when attempting transference of findings. According to

Lincoln and Guba (1985) when attempting transference of findings, the responsibility lies mainly

with the individual attempting transference. Therefore, keeping detailed notes of observations,

data collections, interviews, and their transcriptions allowed me to critique and evaluate

properly.

Dependability

Dependability was utilized when addressing the uniformity of the findings. During the

research, dependability was achieved by providing readers with an explanation of the exact

process of data collection, data analysis, and interpretation. Dependability in qualitative research

is concerned with whether another researcher can employ similar rationale when making decisions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, after coding the data, recoding the same data three days later will strengthened the dependability. Finally, similar to comments made earlier, dependability was strengthened by employing triangulation, member checks, and by completing a peer review process.

Confirmability

According to Guba (1981) confirmability "involves an external auditor attempting to follow through the natural history or progression of events in a project to understand how and why decisions were made" (p. 221). An auditor was used to consider the process of the research, data, findings, interpretations, and recommendations. The purpose of an auditor would allow for another qualified person, if given the same data and similar contexts, to arrive at the same conclusion. The auditor used to review my study is well qualified. He is a professor in teacher education with over 20 years of experience in that role, he has chaired numerous dissertations and currently is the Director of Dissertations for a Doctor of Education program. Other strategies increasing confirmability include peer review and member checking.

<div align="center">

Ethical Considerations

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There are a variety of ethical situations considered throughout the research process. IRB approval was obtained as well as written permissions from each university involved. Secured informed consent from all participants were collected. Since negative responses about the preparation of student candidates could affect faculty and program administration, pseudonyms are used to protect all participants and to encourage honest answers. The nature of the study was voluntary and the participants were given the right to withdraw from the study at any time if they chose. I maintained a high level of integrity, making sure to always protect the privacy of the

participants. All the questionnaires, interview recordings and transcriptions, and documentation were and will continue to be kept locked up or secured in a password protected file for security purposes. Finally, I made an effort to not draw positive or negative attention or a positive or negative light on the edTPA because of the study.

<div style="text-align:center">Summary</div>

This chapter illustrated the methods used to guide this study. It described the phenomenological approach by Moustakas (1994) and how it was used to direct the present study. It listed the research questions that framed the research and the steps that were taken to gather the participants needed, as well as, the setting in which those participants came from. Next, the chapter lists the procedures for the study, followed by my personal role in the study. The chapter described how the questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups were used to inform the research. The conclusion of this chapter charts four different avenues for ensuring trustworthiness and the ethical considerations made, in order to maintain high standards of research.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter provides the results of the data analysis using Moustakas's (1994) phenomenological methodology as demonstrated in his book *Phenomenological Research Method.* The purpose of this research was to examine the experiences of university faculty expected to implement the edTPA within a teacher preparation program. A phenomenological approach was used to "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). This approach allowed the participants to offer their perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about their experience in their own words through the use of a questionnaire, personal interview, and a focus group interview. Transcription was used to collect the data and no attempt was made to correct word choice or grammar.

This chapter provides the study's 12 participants through the lens of the demographic data collected through the questionnaire, includes a brief narrative of how each responded to the open ended questions in the questionnaire and incorporates significant features from the personal interview. The participants answered 17 questions on a questionnaire. Their responses were evaluated to determine the participant's level of anxiety, perception of the edTPA, level of preparedness and involvement, and the level of impact the edTPA had on their program. The questionnaires responses presented an introduction of each participant, offered an understanding of the background of each participant, and gave me some initial insights about their experience in preparing and implementing the edTPA.

Next, the participants answered 11 questions during a personal interview to collect an individual response. Their responses allowed me to listen to each participant's individual reactions, perceptions, and their colleague's reactions to the edTPA. Their responses were also

evaluated to understand their personal experiences in preparation, the professional development taken, the implementation process, and the impact the edTPA had on the faculty, the program, and teacher education candidates. Lastly, the participants from each institution met for a focus group interview to collectively answer 13 questions. Their responses allowed me to better understand the phenomenon in context of the institutional experience. The group's responses were evaluated to understand the department's reactions, the changes or hindsight's when preparing for and implementing the edTPA. The focus groups were given an opportunity to share the largest obstacle, the strategies used, and the impact the edTPA has had on their program and their candidates. The names of the participants, the names used of others, and the names of the institutions referred to during data collection and data analysis were replaced with pseudonyms.

Within the results section of this chapter, I explicitly described five themes that were established within the four research questions. Each theme emerged as I interpreted the essence of the experiences of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). A collection of statements, comments, reflections and/or stories of each of the participants are presented within the results section as evidence of my interpretation of each individual's lived experiences. Each participant's story illustrates their personal feelings regarding the preparation and implementation of the edTPA, and illustrates a picture of their lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

Participants

Twelve university level faculty members from three institutions in the Midwest United States participated in the study by completing a questionnaire, a personal interview and by participating in a focus group interview. Following purposive sampling, the participants invited to participate in the study were university level faculty member who had held a position in a

graduate or undergraduate teacher preparation program in the past three years, in a state where

the edTPA is required for teacher licensure, and the university faculty members were required to

have had some involvement in the preparation and implementation of the edTPA for their teacher

preparation program. Table 4.1 describes the demographic data of the participants in the study.

Table 1

Participant Overview

Participant	University	Years with University	Title	Years of Teacher Education Experience
Alexander	Inverness University	3 Years	Assistant Professor	1-3 Years
Elanor	Inverness University	14 Years	Professor	12-15 Years
Olivia	Inverness University	9 Years	Associate Professor	8-11 Years
Rex	Inverness University	7 Years	Associate Professor	4-7 Years
Anne	River Valley University	15 Years	Professor of Special Education	20+ Years
Dorothy	River Valley University	8 Years	Professor of Education	8-11 Years
Sonja	River Valley University	11 Years	Professor and Chairperson	20+ Years
Sydna	River Valley University	8 Years	Associate Professor	8-11 Years
Helen	Stonebridge University	16 Years	Field Experience Coordinator/ School Partner Liaison	16-19 Years
Jeannette	Stonebridge University	5 Years	Adjunct Professor/College Supervisor	4-7 Years
Sharon	Stonebridge University	14 Years	Professor	12-15 Years
Tara	Stonebridge University	5 Years	Assistant Professor	4-7 Years

Alexander

Alexander (pseudonym) is an Assistant Professor of Education at Inverness University (pseudonym) who directs the Special Education department within the School of Education. Prior to teaching in higher education, Alexander was a special education teacher for ten years in an urban school setting where he earned National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) status. Alexander began working in teacher education at the same time as the edTPA was being implemented at his institution. When he first learned about the edTPA, he related it to his experience with NBCT, and said, "I thought, no way they're asking preservice teachers to do national board type work, I thought that it was being overblown" (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). When Alexander learned more about the consequential nature of the edTPA, he was "concerned that universities were losing their autonomy and their ability to make decisions" (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016).

Alexander thinks the edTPA is a good assessment and has made a positive impact on his program, he wrote in the questionnaire:

> The edTPA has made a positive impact, by forcing our candidates to apply research and theory to their practice, and by forcing candidates to consider their own teaching and assessing practices in ways they did not all do before the edTPA was mandated.
>
> (Alexander, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016)

According to Alexander, the effectiveness of the edTPA would be enhanced if novice teachers were given feedback on their assessment and indicated that the final score earned should not be "a stand-alone indicator of readiness" (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). Alexander thinks the edTPA has enhanced the rigor and the level of thought that is required of his students. He also expressed that he feels undermined as a professor. He expressed "It [the edTPA] made me

feel like we were being pushed around or being kicked around by the state, not having our

expertise taken seriously" (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). Furthermore, he expressed:

> The way it currently stands, faculty have no say and there are just a lot of factors that are
>
> out of the faculty's hands. I think that's problematic. But, I do like the stress that's being
>
> added to student teaching as being added to the teaching process. (Alexander, Interview,
>
> April 25, 2016)

Elanor

Elanor (pseudonym) is a female Professor in the School of Education at Inverness

University. The past 14 years she has served as a professor in teacher education with a variety of

roles. She currently is the instructor of the History and Philosophy of Education course and

Seminar II course, both courses are required for all undergraduate teacher education candidates

to complete. She also is an instructor for the graduate school connected to Inverness University,

teaching in the Curriculum and Instruction Master's degree program and the Ethical Leadership

Ed.D. program. Prior to serving at the university level, Elanor served as a teaching principal at a

private school for 15 years.

Elanor thinks the edTPA has made a positive and a negative impact on the teacher

education candidates, she wrote in the questionnaire:

> Positive in that it made the student candidates more focused and reflective on their
>
> experience. Negative in that it has put a lot of pressure on the students and a lot of
>
> meticulous hard work. The cost of the edTPA has also had a negative impact on the
>
> students. (Elanor, Questionnaire, April 20, 2016)

Elanor also commented that the edTPA has made a large impact within her department. During her interview, she told the story of how three faculty members from her department retired or were pushed into retirement, due to the adoption of the edTPA. She stated:

> [The edTPA] overwhelmed us. "How is this gonna work? Is this gonna be terrible for our students? Will this keep our students from wanting to go into teaching?" Because they feel that "Okay this is too much work?" That type of attitude. But, seriously Bob (pseudonym) and Clarence (pseudonym) they were like, "Okay, this is enough, we're retiring!" (Elanor, Interview, April 25, 2016)

When commenting on her perception of the edTPA as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness, she indicated that it has helped the students be more reflective, but she was not sure if the video excerpt required is the best measure of determining if the teacher candidate will do well in the classroom.

Olivia

Olivia (pseudonym) is a female Associate Professor of English at Inverness University. She administers the English teacher education program for the Department of English and Modern Languages. Olivia has served at Inverness University for the past nine years, prior to that she taught high school English. When preparing herself for the edTPA Olivia described herself as the kind of person who "wants to see it and touch it and experience it to feel like I really understand something well" (Olivia, Interview, April 25, 2016). Furthermore, she commented that she cares deeply about her candidate's success, so she applied to become an edTPA scorer through Pearson. She elaborated, "I think it takes that extensive of training to feel highly competent and prepared" (Olivia, Interview, April 25, 2016).

When asked on the questionnaire whether the edTPA has made a positive or negative impact on her candidates she wrote:

> I think it's too early to evaluate this. This is the first year that our candidates have had to pass the edTPA for licensure, so we are walking them through it for the first year and haven't really received any formal feedback from candidates' yet. I think there are some important elements assessed in the edTPA; however, like with other standardized assessments, they are limitations and the assessment only shows a very small piece of candidates' abilities and preparedness. (Olivia, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016)

Olivia expressed that the edTPA is one of many indicators that demonstrates a candidate's ability and preparedness. According to Olivia, the edTPA is a good assessment of a candidates "ability to plan for a diverse group of students, to assess students' knowledge and abilities and reflect on their own effectiveness" (Olivia, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016).

Rex

Rex (pseudonym) is a male associate professor at Inverness University. Rex teaches the pedagogy courses and serves as a university supervisor for the Physical Education majors in his department. He is also the director of the Physical Education Teacher Education program and has worked for Inverness University for seven years. Prior to serving Inverness University, Rex was physical education and health teacher for 12 years and also filled in as athletic director for nine years.

Much of Rex's experience with his preparation and implementation of the edTPA has been negative. When I asked whether the edTPA has made a positive or negative impact on his teacher candidates, he said that it has more of a negative impact. He elaborated, "The candidates have to be more focused on the edTPA and will not get as much out of the student teaching

experience, which is the greatest learning experience in the whole program" (Rex, Questionnaire, April 23, 2016). Rex mentioned in his interview that cooperating teachers he has worked with have a similar view. He said:

> A few of the cooperating teachers have said this too, that it's too much work during student teaching and it's going to take away from what they're here to do. And they've had some concerns, a couple cooperating teachers, that it's going to affect how your student teachers do when they come to student teach, because they're too worried about [the edTPA]. (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016)

When commenting on his perception of the edTPA as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness, he said that he doesn't think it measures teacher effectiveness at all. He stated, "To be successful at it, you have to stage everything so you can get good video clips which is not what authentic teaching is about. Even the whole Task I is about staging so you can be successful at Task 2 and 3" (Rex, Questionnaire, April 23, 2016).

Rex has experienced many obstacles since the adoption of the edTPA. He discussed that preparing his candidates to be successful during the video-taping portion of the edTPA has been problematic. He stated, "Our classroom is much larger than our regular classroom and our classroom environment changes quite a bit and our candidates don't necessarily know, they may be outside" (Rex, Interview April 29, 2016). Another obstacle that Rex commented on was the timeline and scheduling of the edTPA. Because his candidates are in a K-12 program they are required to spend half of their student teaching semester in an elementary setting and the other half in a high school setting. Rex explained that it is challenging for each candidate to get to know the students, the routines, and familiarize themselves with the age groups, in a short period of time, while trying to complete the edTPA.

Rex has felt a great deal of pressure on him, even though he is not the one completing the edTPA. He explained:

I do feel the pressure because if they're not passing it [the edTPA], that kinda comes back on me….I was worried, what if nobody passes? How are they going to view me and my job, and how am I doing here? So yeah, there has been that pressure and then obviously it is very time-consuming to try to learn the process and even after three years I still don't feel like I'm an expert at it. (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016)

Anne

Anne (pseudonym) is a female Associate Chair of the Department of Education and Professor of Special Education at River Valley University. Anne has worked in teacher education for more than 20 years and has worked at River Valley University for 15 years. Before serving in teacher education, Anne was an experienced public school special education teacher who taught a wide age-range of students from elementary to high school age. Anne was very involved in the preparation and implementation of the edTPA in her department serving as edTPA coordinator. In the early stages of preparation for the edTPA, Anne was asked to be on the leadership team that was given the task, "to learn as much as we could about the edTPA . . . and then we would be the people that would then provide professional development for the rest of the faculty" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). Anne credits her personal edTPA preparedness to many different training opportunities including: bi-monthly meetings at her institution, attending once a month edTPA taskforce webinars hosted by Associated Colleges of Illinois (ACI), attending strands on the edTPA at the National AACTE conference (two years in a row), and reading about the PACT, the predecessor to the edTPA.

When commenting on implementing the edTPA throughout the coursework Anne mentioned that many of the elements found in the edTPA were aligned with much of what they were already doing. She elaborated:

> What we found was that in our teaching, we were having our students plan and we were having our students instruct and we were having our students assess. We might not have been using some of this same vocabulary that edTPA rubrics were using and maybe not with the complexity. (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Anne also described the overwhelmed feelings she had as the institution prepared for the consequential status to the edTPA. In the questionnaire she rated herself as "very anxious" about the edTPA and explained during the interview:

> It really, truly made me feel really overwhelmed and there was a huge responsibility on my shoulders because here I was in charge of preparing all these faculty so that they could prepare all these candidates so our people could pass. It's still a stressful and overwhelming feeling! (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Furthermore, toward the end of the interview, she commented on how even though the preparation and implementation has been a stressful experience, she said that it has been a positive experience.

> When asked how the edTPA has affected her program Anne answered:

> There is now some commonality amongst all programs. I mean there are still some things that are very different, by the nature of the handbooks, there are some things that are very different. But I do feel like some of the conversations that we have about what's really most important for our teacher candidates are a lot more similar than they used to be. (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Dorothy

Dorothy (pseudonym) is a female Professor of Education at River Valley University. She has served in teacher education at River Valley University for 10 years. Prior to her work at the university level, she worked as a classroom teacher and reading specialist for 11 years. During her time in the K-12 sector, she obtained National Board Certified Teacher status. Diana's experience in preparing and implementing the edTPA was a little bit different from the other participants from her institution in the study. She rated herself as "somewhat involved" in preparing her department for the edTPA, whereas, the other participants from River Valley were very involved.

Much of Dorothy's early acceptance of the edTPA was due to her familiarity with the National Board Certification. When discussing her first reactions to the consequential nature of the edTPA, she stated, "It seemed like a good idea in general, I think. I never have a problem raising the bar. . . I'm the one that's, 'No problem, I did that, I did national board, it was fine'" (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016). But then, as Dorothy began to learn more about it, she had more serious concerns. She stated:

> I had more serious concerns just thinking, we're going to have to spend a lot of time teaching something, just to prepare them for this activity that is taking away from some practical time of helping them to succeed in the field. Because I actually like a lot of edTPA, but I think spending forever teaching how they're defining discourse and syntax and things, or form and function. . . I think there was a lot of confusion there. (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Throughout the interview Dorothy expressed strong feelings about her mindset and the mindset of her institution in the preparation of their candidates for the edTPA. She expressed

how she does not just want to prepare her candidates for the edTPA, she wants to prepare them for the classroom. She stated:

> I don't want to teach to the test…as far as the edTPA, we want to prepare them for that, but I'm more concerned about preparing them for a long and successful career in the classroom than just preparing them to pass the test. . . practically speaking, [we] are preparing them [candidates] for two different fronts. (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sonja

Sonja (pseudonym) is a female Chairperson and Professor in the Education Department at River Valley University who has more than 20 years serving in teacher education, with 11 of those years with River Valley. Before teaching in higher education, Sonja was an elementary teacher for 12 years. Aside from leading the Department of Education, she also teaches the math methods course to the elementary education candidates. Sonja's first reaction to the edTPA was one of skepticism. She had many questions of whether or not this assessment was really going to be used in her state, or was the video-taping really going to be needed, or how big of an assessment was it really going to be. But, when she found out it was going to happen she stated:

> I don't want to say we panicked, but we felt like we have to get moving on getting them prepared from their first semester in their Teacher Ed programs. So that by the time they student teach in fall '15, they'll be ready. (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)

When I asked Sonja to explain her thoughts on if the edTPA has made a positive or negative impact on her teacher candidates, she explained, "It has made a negative impact on the student teachers because they (along with their cooperating teachers and supervisor) feel the edTPA preparation takes time and focus away from their student teaching responsibilities"

(Sonja, Questionnaire, April 21, 2016). When I asked Sonja what her perception of the edTPA is as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness, she offered:

> I think the idea of writing commentary on a segment of lessons, as well as documenting their teaching (via video) and student learning can demonstrate teacher effectiveness. However, the extent of the requirements on the commentaries, as well as, the cost and necessity of uploading to Pearson, is problematic. (Sonja, Questionnaire, April 21, 2016)

> Toward the end of Sonja's interview I asked if she had any additional stories that would

help me better understand her experience. She had a positive and a negative story to tell. Her positive story was that her partner school districts who have taken her student teacher candidates for years remarked that they keep getting better and better. Sonja elaborated:

> I think part of that has come from us raising the bar for their expectations of the type of analysis that they need to do early on, whether it's watching a video of someone else teaching and then analyzing it, and then doing some more small group teaching and collecting data, starting that sooner. (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)

The negative story Sonja expressed is how the edTPA places a lot of pressure on the student teacher. They are only focused on the assessment and not on the needs of the children in the classroom. She stated, "Unfortunately that's been like a dark cloud over the student teaching experience" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016).

Sydna

Sydna (pseudonym) is a female associate professor at River Valley University (pseudonym) and has served in teacher education for eight years as instructor in early childhood education and elementary education. Before the university began piloting the edTPA, Sydna went through the Pearson edTPA score training. As mentioned, Sydna works in early childhood

and elementary content areas for her institution, but she qualified as a special education scorer because her teaching experiences in special education from 20 years ago. When she first went through the training Sydna did not truly understand the impact the edTPA would have on teacher preparation. She elaborated:

> I saw it as a summative assessment. . . I thought it was cumbersome, I thought Pearson had a lot of kinks to work out, their support system didn't work; it wasn't a pleasant experience. So, I was dismissive of that, and I did not pursue it. . . I didn't think it was as comprehensive as it is. And slowly but surely, I've seen how it has made changes to what we teach, it's changed how we teach, it's changed how we assess our students. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sydna shared some concerns that she has about the edTPA. She is concerned about the inter-rater reliability. In response to the questionnaire Sydna wrote, "My concern is there is no inter-rater reliability with this assessment. In order to be effective and model best practices—in addition to the quantitative feedback, the teacher candidates need qualitative feedback to best understand their performance" (Sydna, Questionnaire, April 21, 2016). Sydna is also concerned with the amount of time and toil and anxiety it poses on our teacher candidates. She stated:

> I do think that it becomes almost a preoccupation for our student-teachers during their first eight weeks . . . and I think it deters from the essence of what we, those of us who've been in the field for a while, think of as student-teaching. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sydna has seen the edTPA as a catalyst for change. She said, "It forced me to change my syllabi . . . it forces you to learn this language . . . it has changed the courses we teach, and it has changed some of the assignments" (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016).

Helen

Helen (pseudonym) is a female administrative faculty member at Stonebridge University, where she serves the College of Education as the edTPA coordinator, the field placement coordinator and the school partnership liaison. Helen has been a teacher educator with Stonebridge University for 16 years. Helen is also National Academy Consultant for SCALE which AACTE described as individuals who have been trained by SCALE to provide professional development and support edTPA implementation efforts in teacher preparation programs across the nation. Additionally, consultants have a deep expertise in both disciplinary knowledge and expertise (AACTE, 2015b). Helen's experience with the edTPA can be traced back to the first moments when the edTPA was being introduced to the state. When explaining her first reaction to the edTPA she stated:

> That first semester we really just met in a constant daze of uncertainty. . . It's very confusing, very hard to figure out what we're doing. Of course, there were no resources then. There were no webinars . . . it was very flimsy support. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Because Helen was given the task of being the "point person" (now called the edTPA coordinator), for her institution, during those early days she listened to webinars, attended conferences and went to breakout sessions. She stated:

> It was really unclear to me what the plan was, I couldn't picture it yet, I didn't really understand. We did have a work sample here, so it's not that I didn't understand about assembling a portfolio of performance, but just the rubrics and they were already giving breakouts about engaging the local districts and I'm thinking, "Engaging them about what?" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Helen explained that it was at an AACTE conference, when she had the opportunity to follow an edTPA strand and listened to questions from the others when she finally began to understand the edTPA. But, the "game changer" for Helen was the local evaluation scoring. Because she was an edTPA coordinator she had access to the local evaluation material and even though at first it felt like "the blind, leading the blind," every time she engaged with it, she became a little bit more confident and comfortable.

After those early days, Helen went through the training to become an official edTPA scorer for Pearson, and then became more involved at the state level as a representative of small institutions, participating in the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC), and monthly calls with ISBE and SCALE and Pearson. When I asked her about the impact the edTPA has made on her, she reflected back to her days when she was a field supervisor evaluating student teachers. She said, "We didn't have to have any evidence of anything, just went with our guts. . . the impact it's made is that we've had to create earlier levels of rigor, and benchmarks, because we recognize it if we see something" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

When asked what her perception of the edTPA as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness she stated:

> I think it is an accurate measure of the high bar that novice teachers must meet from the very beginning of their teaching career. It allows for room to develop into an excellent teacher but it focuses on the skills that all teachers must have to positively impact student learning. (Helen, Questionnaire, May 1, 2016)

Helen's experience with the preparation and implementation of the edTPA was different from the typical teacher educator because she has been in personal contact with many of the creators, developers, and advocates of the edTPA through: (a) the face to face edTPA official score

training, (b) the National Academy Consultant Training, (c) as a participant in the Embedded

Signature Assessment forum at Stanford University, (d) monthly phone calls with Andrea

Whittaker and SCALE, and (e) through a connection with main voices and early adopters of the

edTPA in her state. She explained:

> I have done things that are directly connected to the people who designed this assessment,
>
> and I get to continually hear from them how they respond to questions, and I've watched
>
> the development. I guess, I have complete confidence in the authentic mission of SCALE
>
> with the edTPA. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Jeannette

Jeannette (pseudonym) is a female adjunct professor and college supervisor of student

teachers in the College of Education at Stonebridge University. Prior to getting involved in

teacher education, Jeannette was a middle school administrator for 17 years. Jeanette is an

official trained scorer of the elementary education edTPA assessment and currently serves as an

edTPA score supervisor. Jeannette has served the university for five years and is currently

teaching in an online program, for candidates who are working toward a Professional Educators

License.

Jeannette's first experience with the edTPA was while she was training with Pearson to

become an official edTPA scorer. During that process, she described what she thought stating:

> Wow, very complicated, very detailed and a lot like the National Board . . . there's a lot of
>
> key points there that are gonna force students, candidates to have to think more in-depth
>
> with things like data and the use of data, which was the big guru word, a new words of
>
> the day, coming up during that time. I was all for it. I thought it was great. (Jeannette,
>
> Interview, May 3, 2016)

Jeannette explained that she did not qualify to become an edTPA scorer on her first try, but

Pearson invited her be trained a second time and she qualified. As a former administrator who

recently went through the Danielson training for the assessment of teachers, Jeannette mentioned

multiple times how taking the edTPA helps prepare pre-service teachers for assessment as

teachers in the profession. She stated, "It [the edTPA] is best practices, just keep that in the back

of your mind. And it is connected to Danielson which is how you're gonna be evaluated later"

(Jeannette, Interview, May 3, 2016). In the questionnaire she wrote, "While it can be daunting, I

believe they [teacher candidates] are better prepared to teach using the Danielson Framework for

Teachers model and a future evaluation tool in their chosen profession" (Jeannette,

Questionnaire, April 30, 2016).

When asked, "Has the edTPA made a positive or negative impact on your teacher

candidates?" Jeannette said:

> I think it has made a positive impact in that they are prepared at a greater extent to plan
>
> for lessons that build upon one another making connections to specific learning
>
> objectives and State standards, analyze data, provide students with useful feedback, and
>
> reflect at a deeper level about their teaching abilities. (Jeannette, Questionnaire, April 30,
>
> 2016)

Sharon

Sharon (pseudonym) is a female professor in the College of Education at Stonebridge

University. Sharon has been a teacher educator for 14 years. Sharon's preparation for the edTPA

started when she was invited to serve on a committee, as faculty lead, that met every Thursday

for a year to figure out "what is this and how is it going to look in our program" (Sharon,

Interview, May 3, 2016). Sharon explained, "Because I'm designated faculty lead for this. I'm

also the primary instructor for the course that the candidates take with their student teaching

semester" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016). That course is titled "Evidence of Teaching

Proficiency" and is an overview course that gives candidates an opportunity to ask questions and

clarify language and submit their edTPA to Pearson. The other course that Sharon teaches is an

Instructional Planning and Assessment course which incorporates two primary projects, "The

Glimpse of the edTPA" and "Student Work Analysis," both projects have intentionally built

edTPA components into them.

Sharon's dean encouraged all of the faculty members in the College of Education to go

through the official edTPA score training, which she completed and qualified. During the

process of scorer training, Sharon told me a story of when she was invited to be one of the

benchmarkers for Pearson with the elementary education handbook. While benchmarking,

Sharon went over to the person in charge and had a conversation about changing a word to

provide more clarity within the handbook. After that exchange, the decision was made to change

the word. Sharon exclaimed, "Look, I changed a word in the national handbook" (Sharon,

Interview, May 3, 2016)!

After benchmarking, Sharon was invited again by Pearson to be a master coder. During

that process she "was involved in the preparation of actually coming up with some of the

materials that the trainers would be using in their webinars for the scorers" (Sharon, Interview,

May 3, 2016). During her interview Sharon explained, "So, I continue to score, every semester I

go through my scoring qualifications and I score my portfolio and whatever happens to [me]... I

pretty much live, sleep, eat and breathe it [the edTPA] at this point" (Sharon, Interview, May 3,

2016).

When I asked Sharon about the impact the edTPA has made on her, she stated:

It just took such a long processing time to wrap our head around it. I think at its basis, it is good teaching. I mean you have to know your kids. You have to be able to teach in a way that they understand and in a way that the lesson relates to them. You should be asking higher order questions. You should be using good pedagogy, and you should be able to use assessment data to drive your instruction. I think those are all qualities of good teachers. So I guess it's validated me in that, that I do that. But once again, it's that I always have to be cognizant that it's not the, be all, end all, do all, for our philosophy. (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016)

When asked to comment on her perception of the edTPA as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness she indicated:

I think it has some legitimate indicators of what good teaching is and looks like. I think there are some things it does not measure, such as, compassion. I also think it depends on who you ask as to what is an effective educator. A district who is focused on test scores as opposed to student centered learning would not think it is as effective; we deal with all kinds of districts. In my opinion, the scoring reliability comes into play, as well. (Sharon, Questionnaire, May 2, 2016)

Tara

Tara (pseudonym) is a female assistant professor in the College of Education, serving her fifth year at Stonebridge University (pseudonym). Before transitioning to teach at the university level, Tara was a former middle school science and social studies teacher, for seven years. Tara is relatively new to higher education whose responsibilities include teaching elementary methods for candidates during their junior and senior year. As she introduced herself to me during the personal interview, she stated, "Of all of our faculty at our university I'm the freshest from the

field" (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016). Tara's experience in preparing and implementing for the edTPA is seen through the lens of someone who did not have a great amount of experience in teacher education when the edTPA was introduced in her program. She explained:

> As a new faculty member I don't think I was as aware of how big of a shift this really was, other than the fact that I was comparing it to the teacher education program I went through and it is far more rigorous than the process that I went through not even a decade before that getting my teaching license. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Tara rated her level of involvement in preparing her department for the edTPA as "very involved." A large part of her involvement with the implementation of the edTPA within her program was in the adaptation of a large interdisciplinary unit project to include all three tasks and many of the major components found in the edTPA. Tara described the new unit project as a co-teaching unit that:

> Allows her candidates to, choose their topic, they get in a teaching team, they plan the unit and they engage in task one, they teach the unit, they video tape themselves and then they do an analysis of their teaching for task two, and then they look at their post assessment data and they do an analysis of their post assessment data for task three. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Toward the end of her interview I asked if Tara had any other stories to tell that would help me understand her experience and she very passionately recommended for institutions to engage not just in the development for the edTPA, but to also engage in the performance aspect of the edTPA. Tara said, "[Candidates] need to be able to engage in the performance aspects of the edTPA and doing so helps their confidence, their attitudes, and their perceptions" (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Focus Group Interviews

Inverness University

The Inverness University focus group interview was held in a conference room on the Inverness campus and included four faculty, Olivia, Rex, Alexander, and Elanor. The interview was completed in 39 minutes. When I asked the group about their first reactions, Elanor was quick to respond with "Total alarm" (Elanor)! Alexander indicated a lot of confusion about how the assessment was going to be consequential to the candidates. Rex said that his reaction was not positive. He indicated concern that this assessment originated in California and discussed how this new requirement was "another thing the state's making us do" (Rex). Olivia responded with more ease than the others, she was familiar with a similar type of assessment from another institution. A major portion of the focus group's first response revolved around how the changes and the magnitude of the edTPA was the catalyst for three faculty members within the department to retire early.

When I asked the participants to walk me through their institution's preparation process they indicated they received information from the campus "edTPA expert" (Alexander) who seemed to take the changes more seriously than the other administrators and faculty within the department. They indicated there were several meetings that offered professional development in the areas of the edTPA that helped them unpack the assessment. Rex discussed how he learned the general idea of what the edTPA was about from the School of Education, but because he is the sole person from his discipline (Physical Education) overseeing teacher candidates, he found it challenging trying to figure out how to incorporate the components of the edTPA into his already full courses. He indicated a lack of support in his specific content area.

Inverness University set up a pilot program that assisted in the faculty's preparation for the edTPA. The "test phase" (Rex) allowed for the faculty to "get more involved in looking at what they were doing" (Rex). The participants said that they were learning about the edTPA right alongside the candidates. They indicated the process of locally scoring the edTPA's during the pilot phase was helpful. Additionally, the official scores received from the few assessments sent to be scored by Pearson was helpful. The last point of discussion about faculty preparedness was the process of mapping out the components of the edTPA throughout the program. Alexander commented, "That was interesting and challenging because we're looking at the teacher ed program, we're also thinking about how much of this do we want to leave to the responsibility of the specific programs" (Alexander). Olivia responded how she is the only person in the English department that "does anything with the edTPA" (Olivia) indicating that any English specific edTPA training must be presented by her in the two English education courses she oversees.

The next question asked the group to respond to the largest obstacle they have faced within their program. Rex indicated the timeline his candidates must complete the edTPA in was very challenging. Because his physical education candidates have two different student teacher placements (Elementary and High School) lasting six weeks long, they essentially need to complete the edTPA inside a three week timeframe. Rex also mentioned the challenge he has faced in assisting the physical education candidates with the video-taping component. Rex referenced a variety of environments (gymnasiums, outside, large spaces) where it is difficult for the candidates to produce a video with the quality sound that is needed to complete the edTPA. Olivia's largest obstacle was in understanding her role in regards to the edTPA. She indicated it was difficult to know what the other instructor's in the School of Education are presenting and

what she should present to her candidates. She indicated that a better structure is needed between the professional education courses and the content level courses.

The next set of questions focused on the implementation of the edTPA. The participant's initial response of these questions focused on how the students' responded to the implementation of the edTPA. Elanor indicated the different levels of anxiety from the candidates and how the candidates were not receptive to the information that she was giving them. Olivia told the story of a candidate who stayed up for 48 hours to complete the edTPA, much against her recommendations. Rex discussed how he would send email reminders to his physical education candidates on little things that are easy to forget when completing the edTPA. Olivia responded, "Isn't that funny how your best suggestion is, "Read the directions" (Olivia)? Rex told a story of how half of his candidates in his methods courses did poorly on an edTPA type assignment because they did not follow the edTPA handbook instructions.

One of the strategies that was implemented at Inverness University was the addition of an edTPA course the semester before the candidates student teach and addressing the edTPA in another course taught alongside student teaching. Rex answered that those courses were "very helpful" (Rex). Elanor mentioned the implementation of the edTPA throughout the entire program has been helpful. She indicated how the candidates are being introduced to the edTPA from the very first course in teacher education and have components of the edTPA taught throughout the program.

When asked how the edTPA impacted teacher educator's perceptions, goals, priorities, and values, the participants offered a variety of responses. The first response indicated the amount of changes and additions that have been made across the program. Elanor discussed the addition of one course and the major changes in two other courses. Alexander referenced how a

the institution took a three credit hour course and made two courses worth five credit hours. Rex discussed how the additional courses in the professional education sequence has required his program to cut courses that will potentially "hurt our rec sport fitness majors because we ended up cutting stuff out that people less likely do in a school setting and more likely be in a rec setting" (Rex). Beth wonders if the cuts made to the content courses will affect the content test scores from another state required exam.

Alexander mentioned how the edTPA has given him a new perspective in teaching the theory behind education and learning, and teaching and assessment and how the edTPA requires a certain mastery of content that had not existed in the past. Elanor mentioned how the addition of the video has encouraged the candidates to have proper classroom management skills. Further, Rex referenced the amount of pressure he feels in making sure his candidates are prepared to take the edTPA. He stated, "The reality is, if they're not ready to do it when they student teach then they're in trouble and ultimately, we're in trouble if they're not passing it" (Rex).

River Valley University

The River Valley University focus group interview was held in a conference room on the River Valley campus and included four faculty, Sydna, Anne, Dorothy, and Sonja, and was completed in 39 minutes. When asked what the first reactions to the edTPA were amongst their department, they collectively described their reactions of being shocked, overwhelmed, "a state of panic" (Sonja) and having a lot of questions. Sonja reflected and said, "At first it was a little bit of shock, just that, 'Wait, what? It's gonna happen during student teaching? What is this'" (Sonja)? Dorothy had a similar reaction. She questioned,

[I was] overwhelmed in the idea that they're gonna do what? And how they're gonna be

done and how are we gonna add this? And also, how are we gonna prepare our students

for this, and when is this gonna actually take effect. . . How are "we" going to do this

(Dorothy)?

The River Valley participants expressed being concerned early during the adoption on the

logistics of the assessment. They expressed that there were many unanswered questions in how

the nation and the state would support the launching of such a large and impactful assessment.

The participants expressed that much of the additional stress was rooted in the unknown cut

scores, the reliability and validity of the assessment, the lack of literature available on the

assessment, and because it was thought that this assessment and its requirements would not stick

like past education initiatives that were prematurely rolled out.

River Valley's faculty preparation process for the edTPA began with attending

workshops and conferences that were offered throughout the state. They mentioned there were a

couple of institutions within the state who had piloted the edTPA and offered their insight in a

variety of ways. A team of faculty from River Valley was established to attend conferences and

webinars, and learn as much as they could about the edTPA to present their findings to the rest of

the department faculty during an edTPA specific department meeting that was held once a

month. Another way that the faculty at River Valley prepared for the edTPA was through

practice scoring. Sydna explained, "We practiced scoring by programs, so we looked at

program-specific samples. They were actually samples that EdTPA gave" (Sydna). Sonja

thought that the practice scoring was "really helpful" in her preparation for the edTPA. The

participants also described how a few of them at their institution participated in the official

scoring training through Pearson. Dorothy said, "They [Pearson] pestered us constantly. They didn't like the way I scored, but they kept begging me to come back" (Dorothy).

Throughout the adoption of the edTPA at River Valley the participants experienced a variety of large obstacles. Sonja expressed that the edTPA language that is needed to be taught to adjunct instructors, university supervisors, and cooperating teachers continues to be a struggle for their institution. Anne shared that her largest obstacle is in disseminating information to faculty across programs. In an example she stated, "Secondary [education faculty] might talk about academic language in this context, but early childhood and Special Ed are using different terms and are not necessarily talking about academic language in terms of language demands" (Anne). Sydna described how the addition of the edTPA was her largest obstacle. She explained that the addition of the edTPA takes away from the student teacher experience by displacing information and knowledge that was previously offered.

The faculty at River Valley implemented the edTPA throughout all four years of the education program to "expose and immerse them as much as we possibly could" (Dorothy). Right when the candidates at River Valley are admitted to the program the faculty are already talking about the edTPA to help them become very familiar with the assessment by the time they are ready to student teach. Each of the participants expressed that they have embedded edTPA materials and assignments into their courses that they have created or have learned about from attending conferences or learned from faculty from other institutions. Sonja and Dorothy both explained that it was important to them that they incorporated edTPA components into their courses, but not at the cost of the integrity of the assignments, project, or the course. They expressed merging the edTPA with past course activities without losing the essence of what was already in place.

Much of the implementation at River Valley was described as being guided by evaluation of the candidate's edTPA portfolios. All four participants expressed how they would look at the areas their candidates needed improvement on and then strategized how they could explain or incorporate that component better in their program or in their individual courses. Anne described that River Valley dedicated one day at the end of a spring semester to, "Look to see if there were commonalities across the department and then in programs for weaker scores on rubrics, and so then we would have a discussion about that" (Anne). From this evaluation River Valley implemented the use of "Boot Camps" that help their institution address areas of need that were determined a specific need for their candidates, or were determined a common need that was expressed at conferences from other institutions.

The participants had many comments about the impact the edTPA has had on their teacher preparation program. Sonja described how the edTPA has raised the bar and that her assignments have improved since the implementation. Lisa expressed how the teacher candidates at her institution are now more prepared for the field of education than they were in the past. She explained how teachers are expected to talk about their data and how the edTPA prepares them for that part of the job. Sydna responded that the edTPA is making her candidates more autonomous. She said, "A lot of what you do in your classroom, those are decisions you're making yourself, so I think in many ways it [edTPA] helps them to be more autonomous" (Sydna). Dorothy described how the edTPA is helping River Valley keep up with field of education and likewise, the candidates are better prepared for the field of education.

Stonebridge University

The Stonebridge University focus group interview was held in a conference room on the Stonebridge campus and included four faculty, Helen, Sharon, Tara, and Jeanette, and was

completed in 47 minutes. The initial thoughts on the required adoption of the edTPA were

mixed. There was the feeling of "Oh my goodness . . . us a faculty we were overwhelmed,"

(Tara) and also there was faculty who "were not feeling the pressure about the consequential

piece" (Helen) due to the fact they felt like got an early start on piloting the edTPA. Sharon

described that her leaders saw "the writing on the wall" (Sharon) and felt as if their university

was prepared because of a similar capstone project that was already in place prior to the edTPA.

Early on during the preparation at Stonebridge much of the attention to the preparedness

of the institution was given to learn how the candidates were going to complete the edTPA with

the level of technology that was needed to video-tape themselves. Helen mentioned that there

was a high level of anxiety around the logistics of providing the technological support that was

needed for the edTPA. But, in hindsight, they found that they as faculty were worried about the

technology piece, when it was really a "non-issue" (Helen) with the candidates. The faculty

described that early during the process of preparing for the edTPA there were some

technological components to the edTPA that were difficult, but overtime the edTPA has

changed. Helen referring to the video-taping indicated that the video process is now much easier

stating that her candidate only need to, " . . .take their clips, cut their clips. . . and compress it"

(Helen). They explained that the edTPA is not as complicated now, as it was when they were

first introduced to the assessment. Sharon explained, "The handbook has been revised three

times now. . . I wish I would've known that they were going to be making revisions all along

because I think that would've lowered my anxiety level as well" (Sharon).

When asked how faculty prepare for the edTPA, much of the discussion revolved around

the process of scoring work samples together collaboratively. Helen stated, the best way to

prepare for the edTPA was to collaboratively "engage in conversation and unpack the rubrics."

Tara described that just looking at the handbook and the rubrics was not enough, but rather going through the act of scoring with the candidates work samples "was really helpful in preparing us" (Tara). Helen agreed that engaging with the rubrics and work samples "is the way faculty gets to understand [the edTPA]." Sharon mentioned some of the faculty's preparedness was due to a number of them being Pearson trained official scorers.

When asked how the faculty implemented the edTPA at Stonebridge University, the faculty explained how each instructor embedded portions of the edTPA into their courses. Jeanette said, "There's pieces that each instructor has to include in their actual coursework as part of the assignments." The participants mentioned the different elements of the edTPA in which they were responsible for in the courses they teach. In Tara's course, she assigns a project that resembles the entire edTPA. In Sharon's course, she has her candidates complete an assignment that mirrors what the candidates are required to do during task three of the edTPA. They mentioned another colleague who is responsible for teaching academic language. They described how they set up scaffolds throughout the program so the candidates are prepared for the edTPA by the time they get to student teaching. However, it was mentioned that not all candidates have the same type of preparation. The programs for the secondary content disciplines take different courses that do not have the same scaffolds in place. There was not a faculty representative from Stonebridge who represented the secondary content areas.

It was expressed multiple times throughout the discussion of implementing the edTPA that the Stonebridge candidates were led into thinking about their students when completing the edTPA. Tracy stated, "Implementing the edTPA starts with candidates thinking very specifically about who are students, how to identify needs and assets" (Tracy). Cathy noted that she gives an assignment in one of her courses called "A Glimpse of the edTPA" which requires the candidates

to adopt a profile from a bank of diverse students and write a lesson plan that will accommodate that student. In reference to this assignment Cathy said, "This assignment has taught me if I have eight kids in the classroom, there's going to be eight different things that I have to think about" (Cathy).

Stonebridge faculty's strategy with their implementation model was to offer opportunities of edTPA practice throughout their program. Through practice, the faculty expressed wanting to give formative opportunities, build the candidates confidence, and give them the right tools to be successful on the edTPA. This approach was also described to help the candidates avoid a type of paralyses that may happen when first attempting the edTPA. However, the participants proclaimed multiple times, their program is not built to just address the edTPA. Their program is set up for candidates to be effective teachers. Helen reiterated an earlier comment from Tara when she said, "I don't think our candidates have lost sight of what it's really about or for because I think the way we talk about it is about teaching, not about passing" (Helen). Cathy referenced this idea when she commented on there being a common philosophy of there being more to being a teacher than passing the edTPA.

Two obstacles where described—time and academic language. Tara explained that implementing the edTPA and developing the edTPA project that is assigned in her course has taken "years of development . . . often at the expense of many other things." Sharon agreed with Tara and also indicated that time was the largest obstacle. The faculty at Stonebridge described investing a lot time into curriculum mapping for the edTPA and preparing assignments and projects.

Stonebridge had a variety of comments about the impact the edTPA has made on their perceptions, goals, priorities and values in training teacher candidates. The participants

collectively described how their program has been positively impacted through the implementation of the edTPA. The comments made about its impact include: (a) brought their faculty together with a common language, (b) a consistent assessment throughout the entire program, (c) engaged conversations about what is in the candidate's best interest, (d) professionalized their field experience and "upped the ante" in candidate proficiency, (e) strengthened our program in the areas of assessment (f) set clearer and more rigorous performance expectations that were needed, and (g) improved their candidates reflections.

Results

The results of this study were determined through analysis of 12 questionnaires, 12 personal interviews, and three focus group interviews. After the data were collected, the open ended questions from each questionnaire, the personal interview transcripts, and the focus group interview transcripts were organized with the aid of NVivo qualitative software. The software enabled me to organize the responses to the questionnaires responses and 15 detailed transcripts. Additionally, it helped me better understand my data through the use of its word frequency and text search functions. It also provided the platform to merge and color code as result of discovery of meaning and essences, and identify the themes linked to the study's four research questions. NVivo served as a vehicle to organize and identify themes for this transcendental phenomenological study of teacher education faculty's preparation and implementation of the edTPA. Answers to the four research questions were provided through the data analysis of each of the 12 questionnaires, the 12 interviews, and the three focus groups interviews to answer the central research question, "What stories do university faculty have to tell about the experiences with preparing and implementing the edTPA into their teacher preparation program?"

In the initial analysis, 27 sources (12 questionnaires, 12 interview transcriptions, and three focus group transcriptions) provided 1,820 different references, coded with the NVivo software to capture 92 distinct phrases/codes. To begin the coding process, I analyzed each piece of data and generated the codes from the exact words used by the participants. As commonalities were found, codes grew in the number of references and sources. New codes were established for data that did not match an already established code. Next I analyzed the codes, re-working or merging similar codes and discarding those that were off topic or did not align with the research questions. I managed to re-work the 92 codes down to 56 codes. The 56 codes were then analyzed and organized into four code families. A family of codes was established for each of the four research questions. In an effort to find the themes within each family the codes were organized in order by the number of references and sources (See Appendix I). From the analysis of each family, five themes emerged—evolving process, academic language, local and official scoring, embed into the coursework, and good teaching.

Research Question One

The first research question, "How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?" offered a voice to the faculty to share their reactions, their perceptions, and to share the first steps in understanding what the edTPA is and how it affects them within their program. The open ended questionnaire responses, the interview responses, and the focus group interview responses were initially coded, by statements that carried significance. All of the codes were then merged into code families by research question. Consequently, data analysis presented two major themes to describe how the participants made sense of the edTPA— evolving process and academic language.

Evolving process. The description of teacher education faculty's making sense of the edTPA is described as an evolving process. The codes that were clustered together to define the theme evolving process include: reaction to the edTPA, edTPA expert or liaison, overwhelming, concerning, or frustrated experience, and changing obstacles overtime. Table 4.2 below illustrates the data that was used to find the themes within research question one.

Table 2

Enumeration Table: Research Question One

Codes	Sources	References
Reaction to the edTPA	12	34
Academic Language	11	29
edTPA expert or liaison	10	16
Concerned experience or frustrations	10	14
Overwhelmed	6	13
Pilot Program	11	13
Feelings	6	13
Changing obstacles overtime	6	11
Committee Work	6	10
Wait it out	5	5
High Stakes	2	2
Faculty have no say	1	1

The words *evolving process* first originated from my interview with Anne, when she stated, "it kind of was an *evolving process*, so as we learn about different pieces and got more comfortable with different pieces" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). Likewise, Sharon shared, "It [the edTPA] just took such a long processing time to wrap our head around it" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016).

During the analysis of the data, the participants generally had a negative first reaction when making sense of the edTPA. The addition of the edTPA assessment was a major change to each institution and the participants were skeptical and had many questions. For example, Sonja stated, "There was just some skepticism only because it just seemed hard to believe that

nationally, that this is something that would be expected of teachers while they're student teaching" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016). Sonja described herself and her department as scrambling when she stated, ""How do we do this, how do we get this going, how do we get it rolling" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)? Similarly, Anne questioned the adoption of the edTPA when she stated:

> How is this going to work? How are they gonna get all these evaluators from across the country and make sure that all these evaluators from across the country are reliably scoring and is it really, logistically, is it really going to work, and what kind of pressure is this going to put on us? So those thoughts I remember were really a feeling of being overwhelmed, like, "Wow, is this really something!" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Olivia described her experience like this, "I had read the handbook and I had as many questions as my students had. And I felt like they had questions that I couldn't answer… [I was] not feeling highly comfortable about it [the edTPA]" (Olivia, Interview, April 25, 2016).

A majority of the participants made responses of being overwhelmed, in shock, or totally alarmed, and described their other colleagues in the department as being overwhelmed as well. They were very concerned about many different parts of the edTPA for themselves and their candidates, and some were frustrated in trying to understand the assessment. Tara said, "I think at first everybody was a little overwhelmed with not only making sense of the assessment" (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016). Anne reflected on her colleagues experiences and said, "Some people were annoyed and aggravated and mad about it [the edTPA] and maybe even overwhelmed and then some people that were just kind of ambivalent" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). Because Anne was heavily involved in the preparation of her department, she talked about her own feelings and stated:

 So it really, truly made me feel really overwhelmed and there was a huge responsibility

on my shoulder because here I was, in charge of preparing all these faculty so that they

could prepare all these candidates so our people could pass. (Anne, Interview, April 27,

2016)

Tara described that everyone within her department faced overwhelming circumstances, but

embraced the level of changes that were necessary to prepare themselves and their candidates for

what lied ahead. Tara put it this way, "I think that as a whole our faculty, even though we were

overwhelmed with it, overwhelmingly so, we embraced the edTPA" (Tara, Interview, May 3,

2016).

One trend within the theme of evolving process was the reliance on an "expert" or

"liaison" that helped the participants to make sense of the edTPA. Sonja stated, "Every

institution, you know and this is true previously and currently, has to have a liaison" (Sonja,

Interview, April 27, 2016). Alexander had a lot to say about the edTPA coordinator at his

institution. During the focus group interview, he mentioned it was through the edTPA

coordinator that he made sense of the edTPA. He said that his edTPA coordinator was pushing

the preparation for the edTPA, even though it was not a priority with the dean or the whole

department. He said the edTPA coordinator "took it [the edTPA] more seriously than everybody

else or really taking charge was a big part of our institution's story of adopting edTPA"

(Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). During his interview, Alexander elaborated on this idea

when he said:

At our university we have one faculty member who really knows the edTPA well.

Actually, no, there are a couple different head faculty members, and the rest of us tend to

overuse those faculty members, so rather than really understand the process ourselves we just go to the experts who are willing to help us. (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016)

Rex also mentioned the "edTPA person" that oversees the edTPA, when he said, "we did get a lot of help from the school, but overall the edTPA person. A lot of meetings . . . even just little edTPA stuff within our normal monthly meetings that were helpful" (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016). Dorothy had many praises for the expert at her institution. She told me that her edTPA coordinator did a great job, she said, "She would present to us and we would talk about different things, and we had a whole layout of 'Okay, we're gonna start with this, and then this is how we're gonna help us figure it out" (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016).

Consequently, even though each university had an expert to rely on, it was understood that the edTPA coordinator did not have all the answers. Alexander offered, "It really felt like the blind leading the blind. Even our leaders were saying, 'We're going to wait on Pearson for clarification about this or that'" (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). The phrase "the blind leading the blind" was an interesting reoccurring phrase, both Helen and Dorothy also described some of their experience as "the blind leading the blind."

It was difficult early on for the teacher education faculty to make sense of the edTPA because of the limited amount of resources that were available. Helen described this part of the process when she said, "There were no resources then. There were no webinars, there was no [AACTE] website; it was very flimsy support. . . Now, we've built a bank of samples. That's another important change from when we started. We didn't have anything to refer to" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Making sense of the edTPA did not happen over the summer, within a semester or even after a year, many participants discussed how it has taken them three to four years to come to the

understanding they have today. Sydna stated, "I just feel like it's been a learning process all the way around, for every member" (River Valley Focus Group, April 27, 2016). Likewise, Rex explained it this way, "Obviously it is very time-consuming to try to learn the process and even after three years I still don't feel like I'm an expert at it" (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016). Sharon elaborated on understanding the edTPA when she said, "In the beginning, it [the edTPA] was the dissemination of knowledge. It was kind of the, 'How do we break these things down, and tell the faculty what they need to know?' And now we're at a different place" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016).

One interesting interaction that took place during the River Valley focus group that aligns with the theme evolving process is how obstacles have evolved over time. Sydna said, "I think we had different obstacles at different times, and I think one of those obstacles was that not all of our districts would allow videotaping" (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016)! Anne responded, "That was a huge obstacle, yeah" (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016). Then Sydna said:

So it's interesting, here we are today, that was such a huge obstacle at that time. I think it preoccupied us, and not one of us mentioned it today. So I think it's interesting to think in retrospect like, "Oh, we got over that." (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016)

Similarly, when I asked Sharon to comment on the largest obstacle in preparing for the edTPA, she answered, "It's actually changed overtime" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016). Helen said something very similar during her interview about the evolving process during her experience. She stated:

There've been some challenges, but they're not challenges that we haven't been able to negotiate and they've been worthwhile negotiations… And some of the latest updates to

the most recent handbook iteration have solved some of the obstacles… So some of the updates along the way have removed some of the frustrations… But I think that word "obstacle" really is the things we still cannot wrap our hands around, our heads around and I would say on top of that list is academic language. (Helen, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Academic language. The second theme that emerged was academic language. It could be considered a sub-theme of evolving process because multiple participants expressed they are confused about academic language or are still in the process of figuring out what academic language means and how it is used properly within the edTPA. Helen, who is very knowledgeable talks about her colleague's uncertainty with the academic component of the edTPA. She stated:

Academic language… it's a nut we have not cracked with confidence. It's not that we're completely incapable but we are not in a position to confidently implement strategies for our candidates. We still stumble around it... I know we need to take that to the next level so we have that confidence, but we're still... It's just still squishy press. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

It has emerged as a theme because of the enormous amount of attention it was given during the study. When completing a word query within the NVivo qualitative software, the term academic language or language referencing the edTPA was mentioned 91 times from 11 sources. It was a common thought and trend throughout the data and was referenced 29 times during the coding (See Table 4.2). Further analysis found that every person at Stonebridge University and River Valley discussed some aspect of academic language, while only two faculty from Inverness discussed academic language during the individual interview. Academic language was a topic of

interest and concern in all three focus group interviews. It was perceived that everyone was thinking about this component of the edTPA.

According to SCALE academic language is "the means by which students develop and express content understandings. Academic language represents the language of the discipline that students need to learn and use to participate and engage in meaningful ways in the content area" (SCALE, 2015, p. 14). In an edTPA guide for candidates titled, *Making Good Choices,* it suggested that a candidate "plans for academic language development in edTPA should address how you support your whole class to be able to understand and use academic language, including English Learners, speakers of varieties of English, and native English speakers" (SCALE, 2015, p. 14).

Multiple faculty commented on the struggle they have had to understand what academic language is and how they can present it properly to their candidates. Tara commented on the struggle with academic language when she explained:

Academic language is still an area that I really struggle with… that I still struggle making sense of, what exactly is discourse in my content area and what exactly is syntax in my content area? And then how do I translate that to teach it in a way that makes sense to my candidates. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Sydna agreed when she said, "I think it changed our academic language, definitely, and I think that there are some parts of it that we still continue to struggle with as a department, in terms of having a common understanding about it" (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016). One of the difficulties about academic language is the differences between content areas. Anne explained, "Secondary might talk about academic language in this context, but early childhood and Special Ed are using different terms and are not necessarily talking about academic language in terms of

language demands" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). Elanor wished that she would have had a

better grasp of academic language when she said:

> …With the emphasis on the academic language. There are not things that are bad, but
>
> they were things that before we didn't really make that much of an effort to put them in
>
> place. So I think that the syntax, the academic language, those types of things, I think
>
> would have been helpful if we had been practicing them more, before this started.
>
> (Elanor, Interview, April 27, 2016).

Multiple faculty also expressed the confusion with the need of academic language

component in the edTPA. They suggested that it is not something that is found in the field or

classroom, and questioned its need within the assessment. Alexander stated, "Like, some of the

things that we require for passing edTPA. Like, understanding the specific edTPA definition of

syntax or like... Those seem to be things that maybe aren't that important for teaching"

(Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). Dorothy agreed, she stated in the questionnaire, "much

of the language is confusing for students and not used by teachers in the field the way it is for

edTPA (syntax, discourse, etc.)" (Dorothy, Questionnaire, April 21, 2016).

Alexander and Dorothy addressed the complexity of the academic language in different

ways. Alexander explained it like this when he stated:

> I'd say a problem in the field of education and that is the use of jargon or the use of fancy
>
> educational terminology to describe simple things. So we talk about requiring students to
>
> talk about discourse and syntax, discourse or syntax in their edTPA's. It's, there's an over
>
> complication that we're making it a complex job of teaching over complicated with words
>
> that we're not defining well. So it's already a difficult job but we're putting in, I don't
>
> know, fancy sounding words that I think are just an odd aspect of the educational world

right now. (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016)

Dorothy expressed the complexity and the amount of time that is needed to help one understand academic language. She said:

> I mean many of these things, spending forever telling them about the central focus or this form or function, and you ask the teacher in the field, "Well explain to me the form and function that you did in the syntax of this course." They have no [idea]... We don't wanna spend too much time just teaching something because it's that [required in the assessment], we want them to understand that [what is in the assessment], but we're preparing them for a lifelong career not just for this one student-teaching experience. (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016)

The term academic language is a component of the edTPA that is required for all candidates to address when completing the assessment. The participants also described that the edTPA has a certain language that is not easily decoded or that needs to be worked throughout the program to better prepare candidates. Helen stated, "With our mind of making candidates comfortable and confident, there's a conscious effort to make the language in our template aligned with the edTPA language. So candidates know, are you gonna say outcome or are you gonna say objective" (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016). Both, Helen and Sonja, from two different institutions described how some faculty are still in the process of understanding the language. Helen said, "We have people on the team who don't engage quite as much with the edTPA and they feel some frustration on having to choose language for that sake. So I think part of that implementation coming" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). Likewise, Sonja stated during the focus group interview, "it's something that we still struggle with is, like we were just saying

about training adjuncts who teach in our programs, where we have assignments and things that we need to explain in the edTPA language" (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016).

Tara addresses the positive side of the edTPA language when she said:

I think looking more globally beyond just our program though, I think that it's given us a common language between our program and somebody else's program. So that when we go to conferences and we go to workshops and we talk to people from other institutions, it's that common language that really brings us together because one program might train their elementary teachers a lot differently than we do, but with the structure of the edTPA that just measures good teaching, I think that it provides better opportunities for us to engage in deeper conversations about what's happening in our programs, instead of focusing on the nuances that are differences between the programs. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

The participants spoke freely about their experiences in making sense of the edTPA and explained how it is an evolving process and something that is understood over a long period of time. And, the evolving process of making sense of the edTPA is ongoing, especially with the struggles and lack of understanding the academic language component and the language the edTPA brings.

Research Question Two

The second research question, "What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?" elicited from the participants the process they took to prepare themselves for the edTPA. The 12 participants in this study prepared for the consequential status of the edTPA in many ways. The code "edTPA training" was used to capture the various types of training that participants participated in. They include, (a) national

conferences, (b) state conferences, (c) webinars, (d) professional development workshops, (e) in

house meetings, (f) online tutorials and instructions, and (g) personal reading. The theme that

emerged for preparation for the edTPA was *local and official scoring*. During the analysis of the

data, a code was created for local score evaluation and a code was created for official score

training. When reworking and merging the codes, the theme that emerged for preparation for the

edTPA was a combined theme of *local and official scoring*. Local evaluation scoring was

discussed in 10 sources and referenced 21 times, and official scoring was discussed in 10 sources

and referenced 20 times. Table 4.3 illustrates the data that was used to inform the theme of

research question two.

Table 3

Enumeration Table: Research Question Two

Codes	Sources	References
edTPA training	16	45
Local Score Evaluation	10	21
Official Scoring training	10	20
Time	9	20
Professional Development	9	13
Responsibility	4	6
National Board Certification	4	6
All the little details	3	3
Building the plane	1	2

Local evaluation scoring. When I asked the participants what it means to prepare for the

edTPA, the phrases or topics regarding local evaluation scoring that were used include local

evaluation training, scoring edTPA's locally or in-house, and score calibration. Each institution

represented in the study used local evaluation scoring during a pilot stage prior to the candidates

being required to submit their assessments to Pearson for official scoring. Sharon revealed this

information about the pilot stage and local evaluation scoring at her institution:

We were piloting the edTPA long before it was consequential, so when the students were

doing the edTPA it was actually the faculty and even some of the supervisors were

actually evaluating the edTPA's local evaluation for us as their capstone project. It wasn't

just, "Oh here they are and if you have time, look at it." It was, "These are the people that

you are... As a faculty these are the people you are locally assessing, and give your data

to whomever." (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Helen, coming from the same institution as Sharon talked about its importance when she, said, "I

think our first real pointed embracement across the college was when everybody had to go

through local evaluation training and evaluate portfolios" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Participants were trained by someone in their own institution or they had an opportunity

to go to another institution where local evaluation score training was being held. Helen

described the local evaluation training, from the trainer's point of view. Helen said, "I'm the

edTPA coordinator I had access to the local evaluation material so I organized the local

evaluation [training] and led a little of the blind leading the blind, but led those" (Helen,

Interview, May 3, 2016). Jeannette had the opportunity to go to a neighboring institution for her

training, she said:

I had the training at Cooner University (pseudonym) with other universities where they

prepped us for just scoring at the local level, just once again the basic... Well I guess it

was more basic, here's not proficient, proficient, and advanced, what to look for in most

types of things and went through those trainings. (Jeannette, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Many of the participants regarded the local evaluation scoring as a "helpful" part of their

preparation. During the River Valley focus group interview Sydna said, "We did some practice

scoring," and Sonja answered, "Yes, Yes," and Dorothy stated, "Which I thought was really

helpful," and Sydna replied, "We practiced scoring by programs, so we looked at program-specific samples" (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016). Rex expressed that the local evaluations were helpful because he was not under the strict support guidelines that come with the official scoring when he stated:

> So last year…I was able to work with them a lot more than I can now 'cause we weren't quite under some of the same rules since it wasn't high-stakes as they will be a lot more involved with them, which really helped me learn it too, which was helpful. (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016)

One participant spoke of the many years of practice she had looking at completed edTPA portfolios and rubrics when going through local evaluation scoring. Sharon said, "So before it went consequential for those two or three years that we had them [candidates] doing the edTPA but they [edTPA portfolios] weren't all going to Pearson, we had in-house scoring, (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Local scoring gave the participants an opportunity to calibrate themselves with each other and with the official scoring. Helen described this part of the experience:

> We stuck with local evaluations. So we would always send a few portfolios off for official scoring just to see if we could calibrate ourselves a little bit. And I personally felt like our local evaluation process was very uncalibrated. So I don't know how valuable that was in retrospect. But again, you're thrashing around in the pool, you're not drowning. You're just not getting anywhere. You're not really swimming. So I would say though, if the dean required everybody to score, to do local evaluation, and so we would compare those to our calibrated ones, we'd compare them to each other. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

From the descriptions of the local evaluation scoring it was clear that this provided the participants an opportunity to unpack the edTPA, look into what the edTPA is asking by engaging with the rubrics, and making an effort to capture the essence of the edTPA. Three participants describe their experience. Tara said:

Walking ourselves through the different tasks of the edTPA, looking at the rubrics, trying to make sense as a group of what each rubric was looking for. And then what was the most helpful was when our work samples started coming in because then we were able to start assessing those work samples in house. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Alexander echoed this response when he said:

I read the details, read the rubrics, we did some of the... I can't remember what they're called, the practice edTPA's? What are those called? Whatever they're called. Where there are only three as a maximum score rather than five. We practiced with those, and it was just a long and grueling process. (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016)

And, Helen said:

The best way to engage in conversation and unpacking of the rubrics…I think local evaluation is that to keep faculty piece as we continue using, engaging with the rubrics with our work samples is the way that our faculty gets to understand. So as much as people have done that, they are that much further along, and as few times as people, faculty have engaged with the rubrics, the further behind they are on their own learning curve. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016).

Local evaluation scoring was used to help each of the participants prepare for the edTPA. It should also be noted that local evaluation scoring continues to be the method of scoring when scoring edTPA assignments and projects as a part of the candidate's learning process.

Official scoring. Seven of the 12 participants participated in the official scorer training hosted by Pearson. To become an official scorer, there are many experience qualifications that must be met before entering the process. For example, only candidates who are current or retired higher education faculty, field supervisors, teacher preparation program administrators and teacher education educators at a state endorsed teacher preparation programs and have content specific expertise, teaching experience, and a bachelor's degree or higher, and have fulfilled one of four other criteria, can begin the application process (There are similar experience qualifications and criteria for applicants who have experience in the K-12 sector). Further, Pearson documents multiple scorer expectations that are communicated when a scorer first applies. It is expected that the applicant complete between 17-22 hours of self-paced training, practice scoring, attend a recorded review session with a trainer, and score two edTPA's. Then once the applicant has met the qualifications and has qualified during the training, it is expected that scorers are committed to scoring a minimum of one portfolio (approximately two - three hours per portfolio) each week. After qualifying, the scorer then must continue to participate in calibration exercises and continue to qualify each grading season (Person Technology, 2014).

Three of the four participants at Stonebridge University (Helen, Sharon, and Jeanette) were trained to be official scorers. Sharon stated during the focus group interview, "Some of the faculty are also Pearson trained. I know you're Pearson trained, I'm Pearson trained, you're Pearson trained. Another faculty member is Pearson trained as well. And actual scorers" (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016). Many of the faculty at Stonebridge University participated in the official scorer training because they were encouraged by their dean to become an official scorer. Tara, the only participant from Stonebridge in this study who was not

officially trained, did not go through the training because she recently was finishing her doctoral degree and did not have the time to invest in edTPA scoring. Tara elaborated:

> But now that my dissertation is finally finished. The next order of business for me is, as somebody who is preparing these candidates to do the edTPA, I want to be able to give them the best guidance and advice as possible. So my personal next step is to be trained as a Pearson scorer for the edTPA, so that I feel very well versed in what Pearson is looking for. And my in house assessments that I'm doing tend to align fairly closely with what ends up coming back from Pearson, but I think that it's only gonna help me get better if I train through Pearson as well. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

The first time that Jeannette went through the official score training she did not qualify. She described that experience:

> Once I got into the training and found out that I didn't qualify, I was a little put off thinking, "Oh, my God! I just supervised staff members at middle school level for, I think it was up to 17 years at the time when I retired, and I'm not qualified, to be able to score these when I was looking at some of the same things." (Jeannette, Interview, May 3, 2016)

As it was mentioned earlier in the chapter, Jeannette, was invited to participate in the official training a second time; she qualified, and currently serves Pearson as a supervisor who oversees other official scorers.

Helen was the only participant in the study who mentioned attending a two day face to face official score training. Whereas most of the participants were officially trained through a series of webinars and online collaborative workshops, Helen received the training at one of the universities in the state and her evaluation of the training was that it was very helpful.

Being a scorer can be very demanding and time consuming. Sharon revealed some of her experience as a current edTPA scorer, she said, "I continue to score, every semester I go through my scoring qualifications and I score my portfolio and whatever happens to... I pretty much live, sleep, eat and breathe it at this point" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Two of the four participants at River Valley University (Dorothy, and Sydna) mentioned that they went through the official scoring training with Pearson. Dorothy had much to say about her experience in becoming an official edTPA scorer. She explained:

Well, I registered for the whole training thing and I did the whole training, and I think we all failed. But they kept emailing me asking me to be a scorer or whatever, because I think they must have been desperate. So I went through that whole process. And I must admit when I went through the process I lost... I had less confidence because I was like, "When I look at this, I wouldn't do this, and they're doing..." So that kind of made me worried, because I'm like "This is actually showing me, and we're kind of off." I mean they didn't want any other scorers off by one, and I was off by two in several different areas. And I thought, "Well, I still kind of like the way I scored this." I think that was kind of a big process, but it helps me to at last kind of get it from the horse's mouth. I saw, this is the experience, this is what it's like. So I kind of felt like at least I know what we're dealing with. (Dorothy, Interview, May 27, 2016).

Sonja did not go through the official score training, but mentioned she and her other colleagues learned a lot from those at her institution who did go through the training. Sydna was hired as a Special Education edTPA scorer very early on in the adoption of the edTPA and described her experience as:

I thought it was cumbersome, I thought Pearson had a lot of kinks to work out, their

support system didn't work, it wasn't a pleasant experience. So, I was dismissive of that,

and I did not pursue it. I didn't, I felt like, "Okay, I learned a lot from it, I see where

they're going with this," but it's nothing that I wanted to continue or devote my time to.

Olivia was the only participant from Inverness University who mentioned going through

the official scoring training. Mentioned early in this chapter, Olivia went through the training in

an effort to learn as much as should could about the edTPA, and receive as many resources as

she could so she would be prepared to help her teacher candidates. This is what she shard about

the Pearson training, she said, "I felt really prepared… Doing the Pearson Training accelerated

my preparation…Really just that experience of becoming an edTPA rater was really valuable in

understanding the way that Pearson thinks through things, that was invaluable" (Olivia,

Interview, May 25, 2016).

As noted earlier the data showed that there were many other avenues for faculty

preparation other than the theme, *local and official scoring*. It is important to mention that the

conferences, webinars, and the in-house edTPA meetings and the professional development

meetings the participants participated in contributed to the *evolving process* of making sense of

the edTPA and the preparation of the edTPA. The theme of *local and official scoring* indicates

the level of value that the participants placed on this type of preparation.

Research Question Three

The third research question, "What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member

to implement the edTPA?" sought from the participants a detailed description of their experience

during the implementation of the edTPA. During the data analysis more codes aligned with the

research question three implementation code family than any other family (20 codes). The

identified theme that emerged from those 20 codes is titled, *embed into the coursework*. The

most obvious code *embed into the coursework* received the most references (41) from the most

sources (14) in comparison of all the other codes. Table 4.4 below, illustrates the data that was

used to determine the theme for research question three.

Table 4

Enumeration Table: Research Question Three

Codes	Sources	References
Embed into the coursework	14	41
Video Taping	13	22
Supporting the candidate/student teacher	11	19
Curriculum Mapping	8	13
Using the edTPA Scores/Data	8	11
Aligned the faculty	6	11
Collaborate with other institutions	6	10
Component added due to the edTPA	2	10
Boot Camp	6	9
Aligned with what we're already doing	5	8
Lesson Planning	5	7
Updates to the edTPA	6	6
Mini edTPA	4	6
Pressure on student teachers	3	6
Difficult component of the edTPA	1	5
Rigor	4	4
Research and Theory	3	4
Preparation of Candidates	3	3
Changes to the edTPA	1	3
Timeline for Student teachers	1	1

The theme suggests that the participants acknowledge that embedding the edTPA into the

coursework is what it means to implement the edTPA. The participants described *embed into the*

coursework when illustrating major program wide changes, individual course changes, course

alignment with the edTPA, the use of boot camps, and the use of a miniature edTPA's or practice

components of the edTPA.

Changes to the course structure. When the edTPA was announced as the new testing standard for pre-service teachers, institutions began recognizing the work that needed to be done within the programs and within the courses taught to prepare the candidates to successfully complete and pass the edTPA. Sydna commented on this idea when she said, "I think it's changed the content of the courses that we teach, and it has changed some of the assignments," (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016). Elanor also mentioned the amount of change that took place within her program. She explained, "It's changed some of the components... Like this is adding in the seminar two… Changing seminar three and even changing seminar one. It's changed what we consider important for preparing our student teachers" (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016). Along the same lines, Jeannette said, "We are embedding information about the edTPA in all class settings in the College of Education" (Jeannette, Interview, May 3, 2016). Rex, who prepares physical education teachers referenced the questions he first had and the amount of change that took place at his institution and in his program when he said:

> Well, how can we build this into some of our classes? Of course the whole School of Ed was going through a process at that point to redesign the program, not just for the edTPA but for other state requirements, so there were those conversations. But then from the content side of things, "What can we do as a program, a Phys-Ed program, to build the tasks into our courses over here?" (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016)

A common idea from each institution represented in this study was that the components of the edTPA need to be filtered through the entire program. Elanor said, "By the time they take the edTPA, they've had seminar one, they've had seminar two… they've had the methodology classes. So by the time it actually comes for them to actually do the edTPA, I think they're ready" (Elanor, Interview, April 27, 2016). Anne responded with a similar comment when she

said, "We recognized that it was really important for our candidates to experience similar kinds of activities in their methods courses to what they would be doing when they were student teaching" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). From the very start of the teacher education program the edTPA is introduced. This idea was best captured from Sonja at River Valley University when she said:

"You're going to do something called the edTPA when you student teach." So I think right when our candidates get in a program, and they're in their first seminar. We start talking about it a little bit so that they become familiar with, when we say edTPA what we are talking about, but then as we thread things through, whether it's an assignment or an SEM book, "This is what was meant by academic language, or in this discipline this is what it's meant." That they are kind of in tune with it, but we know that it's not until they actually are doing it that it all comes together. (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)

The focus group from Inverness University had much to say about the changes the edTPA has brought to their teaching programs and also to other programs that are affected. Rex elaborated:

With all the changes in the professional ed coursework, in some of the programs, we had to cut out some content credit hours… We had two, three credit classes, we knocked them down to two. We have five activity classes that the candidates take, and two of them are three credit hours we knocked them down to two. Which, then the instructors kind of had to decide, "What do I take out?" … It actually probably hurt our rec sport fitness majors more because we ended up cutting stuff out that people less likely do in a school setting and more likely be in a rec setting, 'cause those courses our rec majors also take. But we had to cut stuff out because you go from three to two, less class time. (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016)

Olivia, from the same institution as Rex, but representing the English Education program said:

I thought about that, too, as we had to cut back and make some decisions, saying like, "Oh, now they can only take this or that..." I'm curious. I'll be interested to see if we start to notice any trends and deficits in the content scores. (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016)

Alexander also mentioned, "Taking [EDUC] 249 and breaking it up into five hours, instead of three credit hours. That's a big change. We basically took one course in which we taught methods and educational theory and we split them up" (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016).

Scaffolding and curriculum mapping. Tara explained how the scaffolding that was completed through the program has benefitted the teacher candidates. She said:

Although candidates have experienced great trepidation going into the edTPA, because of the scaffolding we provide throughout our program, we have found through our own research studies (some published, some pending publication) that candidates enter the final student teaching semester when their consequential edTPA is completed with a good level of confidence and an overall positive attitude toward the edTPA. (Tara, Questionnaire, April 30, 2016)

The participants described the need to divide each of the tasks and rubrics of the edTPA and address them multiple times, by multiple people prior to student teaching. With so many moving parts, institutions spent time curriculum mapping and scaffolding the edTPA to deliberately cover the edTPA throughout the program. Sydna explained:

We have four programs we're licensed for, early childhood, elementary, Special Ed and secondary. So each of those programs looked at their sequence of courses, and we did a cross-walk, basically, with the courses that are offered, and then the content of the

edTPA, so that we could be sure that we were introducing and obviously, developing, and

our students were becoming proficient with the skills that would be required in the

edTPA. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Anne described some of the specifics of what this type of curriculum mapping looked like when

she said:

So, in the first literacy course that they take in elementary ed, they're going to do an

activity that is similar to what rubrics one, two and three are evaluating the students on.

And then in their secondary literacy course they're going to do an activity that the rubrics

four through six kind of cover. And so each program did a curricular map of the different

elements in edTPA and tweaked their... Their early methods courses they were just doing

a couple of the rubric components. But then by the time they got to the semester before

student teaching, one of their major course assignments is really a little mini edTPA.

(Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Rex's experience was very similar to Anne's, except he is still working though some of the

mapping. He said:

And it was decided Task One would fit into our methods course which happens to be a

course that I teach, our middle and secondary methods class. Task Three was built into

our assessment class as we do have a dedicated assessment class for our Phys-ed majors.

And of course, that's gonna have to change next year because that faculty member left, so

then the adjunct's that teaching it next fall knows nothing about the edTPA, so I'm gonna

have to step in and kind of help him out, try to get that built in. Task Two, we really still

have not quite decided what's the best place to build that in, which course. I've kinda

talked about it within, with Task One, within the methods class. But I think we'd still like

to have Task Two built into a specific class, we're looking at what class, what class would

maybe that fit... (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016)

Added components in each program. Although it was a new teacher performance

assessment and there were many new components that needed to be addressed in each program,

many participants discussed how the edTPA was similar or was aligned with the teacher

performance assessment that existed prior to its adoption. At Stonebridge University, prior to the

edTPA all of the clinical and student teaching field experiences have been performance based.

Sharon said, "Before the edTPA started rolling on in. And then we were kind of poised when it

did come down" (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016). Sharon described the previous

assessment:

> For about –two to three years prior to the edTPA, we used a Student work sample
>
> analysis for the capstone project. It was very similar to the edTPA in that it called for
>
> data based decision making, but there was no video-taping or planning commentary; just
>
> a pre assessment and lesson planning. (Sharon, Questionnaire, May 2, 2016)

Sharon also stated during her interview that a leader in her department was in tune with the

upcoming changes and began to prepare the institution. She explained:

> Bob (pseudonym) kind of saw the writing on the wall and we saw some conferences
>
> about student work analysis being kind of the new wave coming through. And so we
>
> actually had a student work analysis piece for about two years, before the edTPA.
>
> (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016)

At River Valley University, prior to the edTPA their candidates conducted an impact on student

learning project. Sonja explains the project as:

Unit-wide key assessment is a formal Capstone presentation that involves a formal

evaluation rubric aligned with the unit goals and program outcomes. Two faculty

members conduct the evaluation with each exiting student teacher using a semi-structured

interview format. (Sonja, Questionnaire, April 21, 2016)

Inverness University also described a similar assessment to the edTPA called the Teacher Work

Sample (TWS). Rex referenced the TWS as a mini edTPA. Elanor said, "because of the TWS.

We were already doing some of the things that were going to be a part of edTPA. So after the

initial, like 'Oh, my,' we were able to realize, 'Okay, it's not that much different except for the

video part'" (Elanor, Interview, April 25, 2016). Olivia described the previous assessment as

The Teacher Work Sample was a requirement for the candidates' final portfolio. Like the

edTPA it required candidates to plan a learning segment, complete pre and post

assessments and analyze the results. I think it met similar goals for the teacher education

program. (Olivia, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016)

A course taken alongside the edTPA. The participants in the study discussed a course

that is taken concurrently with student teaching used to help guide and support the student

teaching candidates through the completion of the edTPA. At each institution represented the

course was there prior to the edTPA, but the data shows that the content within that course

emphasizes the edTPA heavily, especially in the first eight weeks. Sonja, at River Valley said:

Every other Tuesday, all of our candidates, student teachers come back to the campus for

seminars. That was one of the things in addition to changing our assignments and what

we're doing in our course work. We realize those seminars, at least the first two months,

had to focus on getting them ready for the planning, the instruction, and the assessment.

(Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sydna, also from River Valley talked about some decisions their institution was making about

offering the candidates additional time outside of the seminar and outside of student teaching to

complete the edTPA. She explained:

> And we've looked at different activities in terms, or different events and different
>
> schedules, and maybe different timelines that would provide support to our teacher
>
> candidates in order to actually complete the edTPA while they're student teaching. We
>
> bantered about, "Do we give them a day off from the classroom or do we bring them back
>
> to campus?" We've not done that, but we've considered several different, I guess, ways of
>
> structuring their ability to complete it. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sharon at Stonebridge University said:

> We actually have a class that they take. It's like an edTPA seminar that they take during
>
> their student teaching to guide them…. We run a course that's called "Evidence of
>
> Teaching Proficiency" and I teach that course. And, it's kind of an overview seminar
>
> kind of thing and it gives them an opportunity to ask questions and clarify language and
>
> things like that. That's the class in which they actually submit their edTPA, like we open
>
> the Pearson accounts together and everything. (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Alexander addressed this idea when recommending that other institutions have a class that

covers the edTPA. He said:

> I think one big one is just implementing a class that everyone has to take before they take
>
> the edTPA. Just making sure that whatever programs fell through, at least they would
>
> have one shot at all the components. So, implementing at seminar two and then also,
>
> changing seminar three somewhat to address edTPA. (Inverness Focus Group, May 3,
>
> 2016)

The "seminar" class that is taken alongside student teaching is one way that institutions are addressing weakness or filling in gaps. Another way that two of the three institutions (Stonebridge and River Valley) have embedded the edTPA into the coursework is through the use of boot camps. Boot camps were described as workshops that are geared to assisting the student teacher candidates (and supervisors and cooperating teachers) in areas that are needed most. Sydna described that the topics for the boot camps were decided upon the types of questions they were receiving during class, and based on the struggles they were hearing about from the state and national level. The one day boot camp at River Valley University this past year offered three different workshops addressing topics such as: (a) Using Data, (b) Using Cognitive and Motivation theory and Research Based Teaching Practice in Planning and Instruction, and (c) Analytic and Descriptive Writing. Other topics that have been addressed in the past include, (d) Knowing Your Students and Their Personal Assets and Research and (e) Evidence-based Practice and Theory.

Tara at Stonebridge University also described the use of boot camps:

I engage them in series of I call them boot camps, for the edTPA where I literally walk them through each task of the edTPA and teach them how to do, how to perform the edTPA with the unit that they planned... we look at every single rubric and dissect what the question is looking for, how that translates onto the rubric… They complete that with their partner and it culminates in a poster session where the whole college of education comes in. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Embed edTPA components within a course. Every participant described how they have embedded edTPA components within a course. Alexander gave a good explanation for this type of implementation when he said, "We as professors are incentivized or we're driven I suppose to

look at, to examine our course work and to make sure that the key components of the edTPA are explained there" (Alexander, Interview, May 25, 2016). Jeannette shared the same point of view when she stated:

> I pick up from the other colleagues that are actually teaching classes that they're constantly making sure they're being consistent with what they're asking the candidates to do and their research based is being added to it. And all the important details for edTPA are being implemented in all courses. (Jeanette, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Sydna discussed how she has embedded components of the edTPA into her course. She said:

> In my syllabi, I will bold and then put an asterisk after some aspect of the assignment that is edTPA-like. And sometimes... I mean, I'm typically taking that from the rubric, right? One of the things that we talk about pretty substantially, is this idea of assets, community, cultural and linguistic assets. So when that is embedded into an assignment, that might be bolded and have a little asterisk after it to say, "Yeah, this is edTPA-like." And so that they understand when they get to that student teaching semester, "Oh yeah, we've done that before." That should provoke some previous experience. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Olivia also explain how intentional she is about embedding the edTPA into her course:

> In both of those classes, I have intentionally, but at this point, generally and broadly referenced the edTPA. And so, they, for both of those classes, create lesson plans and a unit plan. And so, I've tried very intentionally when we go over the lesson plan, for example, and the unit plan, they're doing a unit for reading, it's only a five-day unit, but still... To address those specific to the edTPA. (Olivia, Interview, May 25, 2016)

Described earlier in the chapter is the work that Tara has done in converting an entire project in

her course to teach the components of the edTPA. She elaborates on that project:

> And so what I did is I embedded the entire edTPA into that project. So I took the middle
>
> school science edTPA and I adapted it so that it would be more appropriate for
>
> elementary students, focus of my course is K5, soon to be one through six and so the
>
> candidates choose their topic, they get in a teaching team, they plan the unit and they
>
> engage in task one, they teach the unit, they video tape themselves and then they do an
>
> analysis of their teaching for task two, and then they look at their post assessment data
>
> and they do an analysis of their post assessment data for task three. (Tara, Interview, May
>
> 3, 2016)

During the Stonebridge University Focus group there was an interesting exchange on this very topic. Jeanette, who teaches online and is a college supervisor and has not been involved very heavily in the implementation started this conversation by asking the others from her institution:

> Oh, how do you integrate? Because I'm sensing that, from our lesson plan process, that
>
> there's pieces that each instructor has to include in their actual coursework as part of the
>
> assignments. Obviously you're all using the same lesson plans that pretty much
>
> coordinate with edTPA. So are there other things that you have to include in your actual
>
> courses? (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Sharon responds, "Tara does a complete edTPA." Helen and Sharon both confirm saying, "It's the full edTPA." Jeanette asks about the assignment in Sharon's course, "Yours?" Sharon responds, "Yeah, mine in my math course, they do a task three. And, Amy (pseudonym) teaches academic language, but this is how it's filtered down." Jeannette answers, "Okay, so everybody's got a little piece built into the..." and Sharon interrupts, "Not everybody yet. That's the piece we're still working on" (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016).

Video-taping. Another trend that was mentioned when discussing embedding edTPA components into the coursework was the need to address skills such as video-taping. Video-taping was a rather large topic of discussion receiving 22 references out of 13 sources during the coding process. The video-taping component was described as an obstacle for each institution as they questioned the tools that were needed and the skills that each candidate needed to possess. Sonja questioned, "How do we get them to do some video-taping the semester before they student teach?" Because you can't wait 'til the first time they video-tape them and annotate and so forth" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016). Dorothy said, "We have built in video-taping across our courses. We've taken video-taping out of my course for this semester, but we're doing it again next semester" (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016). Sydna described her experience:

> So it wasn't always the addition of an assignment but, for example, it might have been the addition of videotaping. So perhaps they were adapting curriculum, and doing a little teaching activity. Well now they, in addition to doing that, they're also videotaping their instruction. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

One of the main components that Elanor has embedded into her course is video-taping. She explains:

> The main thing that I really work with them on is the video. Because in my foundations and the multicultural foundations, they have to do with kind of two-and-a-half videos. They video themselves at their presentations and then they have to do an analysis video of another video that they look at. So those are the main things that I do. But another thing that I think... That I do that would help them be prepared for the edTPA. (Elanor, Interview, April 25, 2016)

Mini edTPA. Another trend that was discussed that aligns with the theme, embed into the coursework, is having each candidate complete a miniature version of the edTPA (mini edTPA) prior to student teaching. The use of a mini edTPA enables the candidates the ability to combine and practice all of the components necessary for successful edTPA completion. Anne described the use of the mini edTPA at River Valley as such:

> Each program mapped out a curriculum map of the different components of edTPA and they use this on many of their trainings. Like a signature assignment for that particular course that was very edTPA like. Maybe not the whole edTPA but a component of edTPA. And it was scaffolded so that in their early methods courses they were just doing a couple of the rubric components. But then by the time they got to the semester before student teaching, one of their major course assignments is really a little mini edTPA. (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Tara elaborated on the mini edTPA she developed for a course at Stonebridge. She explained:

> I now do a unit that's called the ISTEM which stands for Integrated STEM unit and within that unit…they design a week long unit of study around a STEM topic. But this time they actually get to teach it in one of our partner schools to the grade level that they've designed it for, in co-teaching teams. And so what I did is I embedded the entire edTPA into that project. So I took the middle school science edTPA and I adapted it so that it would be more appropriate for elementary students… So they are essentially doing an entire edTPA co-taught, and what that allows me to do is to provide a scaffolded experience where first they're tackling the edTPA with somebody else. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Tara suggests that the use of the mini edTPA has made positive strides with her candidates. She

elaborated:

> From a qualitative perspective the themes that have emerged for me are that candidate's
>
> levels of confidence, their perceptions of the edTPA in general, they're all improving
>
> because they've had this [mini edTPA] experience first. They approached their
>
> consequential edTPA with a greater level of confidence and attitude towards the edTPA
>
> because I think they see in those co teaching teams that it can be done. So then they get
>
> to the real edTPA and they're ready to roll! (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Program wide lesson plan template. One of the main artifacts required that can have a large impact on candidate success within the edTPA and within the teaching profession is the candidate's ability to write a lesson plan. The participants in the study consider the lesson plan to be a pivotal artifact within the edTPA portfolio. The participants at each institution made a reference to a lesson plan template or format that is used by all teacher education majors. Interestingly, Stonebridge and River Valley were in the process of designing or redesigning a program wide lesson plan template during the same time this study was being presented. Helen at Stonebridge offered some of the discussion topics and decisions that are made in developing a lesson plan template. She said:

> Currently we're working on revising our lesson plan template and the conversations each
>
> week when we have been meeting the team that's meeting about that right now, we still
>
> had a bit of a tug around language because there are different ways to different
>
> vocabulary for lesson planning. And with our mind of making candidates comfortable
>
> and confident, there's a conscious effort to make the language in our template aligned
>
> with the edTPA language. So candidates know, are you going to say outcome or are you
>
> going to say objective. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Anne, at River Valley questioned whether or not there should be a department wide lesson plan.

> "Well, if we're not gonna have a department-wide template, should we at least have components, required components that are similar?" "Okay. Yes, we should." So, we decided on that. But then the teacher candidates come back and say, "Well, when I'm in your class my lesson plan has to look like this. But when I'm in his class, my lesson plan has to look like this." (Anne, Interview, May 27, 2016).

At Inverness University, they have a lesson plan template that all disciplines within the teacher education unit are required to use. In some of the content areas there are addendums to the lesson plan template that meet specific content area needs. The lesson plan template was revised a couple years ago to address the additional components needed for the edTPA. Some of the additions to the new template offer the candidate a place to include a: central focus, cultural and community assets, language function, syntax or discourse, and research and theory.

Evaluation. The participants described how they are in tune with their candidate's abilities and understandings with the edTPA and the areas that need continued improvement. Provided below are three examples of how three different participants have embedded components of the edTPA into their coursework based on weakness. Sonja, described how they noticed that their candidates were weak in the area of providing proper feedback to their students during the assessment portion of the edTPA. She said, "We realized feedback was something we were noticing was weak, so we made sure that we did more, that we gave them more opportunities to practice giving feedback and analyzing that feedback in our courses" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016). Further, Alexander, felt as if his candidates were really weak in their understanding and ability to articulate research and theory sufficiently. He elaborated:

I really started emphasizing research and theory in a way that I hadn't before, and I look

at assignments every semester, and I see if there's any changes I want to make. And I

require that research and theory be tied into, and connected when students do research

papers, when they write about a given intervention, they have to read the section on the

theoretical framework, or the theoretical backing, and they have to discuss that in their

papers. (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016)

Olivia described the weakness her candidates were showing. She said:

I feel like we probably should have been addressing assessment and pre-assessment and

planning based on assessment more, even going into the edTPA. So that is one area

where it's made me focus on it more and I think that is a good thing, 'cause we maybe

should have been doing more of that before. (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016)

The participants perceived that it was necessary to build and develop opportunities for

teacher candidates to experience the edTPA or components of the edTPA prior to their student

teaching semester and to continually have edTPA supports in place during their student teaching

semester. Although, much of the edTPA was aligned to what was already being done within

each program, the participants described the need to embed the edTPA components into their

coursework in order for their candidates to be successful when completing the edTPA.

Research Question Four

The fourth research question, "How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted

teacher educators' perceptions, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?"

offered a voice to the 12 participants for them share the impact the edTPA has made on each of

them. During the data analysis 17 codes with 142 references were identified to describe

experiences the participants shared about the impact the edTPA made on their lives. Further

analysis into each of the codes revealed the theme—*good teaching*. Table 4.5 below, illustrates

the data that was used to determine the theme for research question four.

Table 5

Enumeration Table: Research Question Four

Codes	Sources	References
The edTPA is …	11	34
Suggestions and Recommendations	8	16
The State	9	14
Changes from the past	7	13
Raises the bar	7	12
Reflection on Candidate Success	7	12
Teach to the test	7	11
Danielson Model	3	8
Reliability	3	4
Articulate Teaching	2	4
Candidates look to the faculty	3	4
Candidates were fearful	3	3
Good amount of stress	2	2
Ethical issues	1	2
Performance	1	1
Enhancements of the edTPA	1	1
Staging	1	1

Good teaching. This phrase was consistently used by many participants to describe the

edTPA. The frequency of the actual wording "good teaching" in reference to the edTPA and the

other descriptions of the edTPA that align with good teaching, suggests the theme for this

research question. The significant statements within the code "the edTPA is" refers to the

edTPA as, good teaching (six times), quality teaching (one time), good elements (one time),

positive things (one time), good assessment (two times), and good practice (two times). The key

words that were used by the participants have been italicized below to emphasize the key words

and to illustrate how often the words of the theme or 'like' words were used.

The participants describe their perception of the edTPA as a whole as good teaching.

Sharon said, "I think it has some legitimate indicators of what *good teaching* is and looks like"

(Questionnaire, May 2, 2016). Anne and Tara both describe it similarly. Anne said, "I think the

concept of edTPA is good - because it measures *good teaching*" (Questionnaire, April 25, 2016).

Tara said:

> The edTPA just assesses *good teaching.* And so what it's done for me is it's provided a
>
> very clear framework and a very clear set of guidelines of what constitutes *good teaching*
>
> according to the state, so that I can align what I'm doing to make sure that it aligns with
>
> yet another body of resource. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Other participants explained the elements that make the edTPA "good." Olivia wrote in her

questionnaire:

> There are some *good elements* assessed such as candidates' ability to plan for a diverse
>
> group of students, to assess students' knowledge and abilities and reflect on their own
>
> effectiveness. These should already have been taught in TE [teacher education]
>
> programs, but I supposed it would require programs to better their program if they were
>
> not already teaching these elements. (Olivia, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016)

Dorothy said, "I think that there were *positive things* about EdTPA that we spent time on,

because that's just good, that just adds to our program, and there are other things that we teach

that we need to familiarize them with" (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016). Alexander

called the edTPA a good assessment and explained further:

> As with any *good assessment*. Its use in measuring novice teacher effectiveness would
>
> be enhanced if novice teachers were allowed to receive feedback on their assessment

report. Also, the final score should be considered a useful data point, but not as a stand-

alone indicator of readiness. (Alexander, Questionnaire, April 19, 2016)

Sydna shared specifically about the components of the early childhood edTPA. She stated:

Yes, but I think the basic tenants of it are *good practice* in many ways. I mean I'm

speaking, and I'm speaking probably most specifically about early childhood, where they

drill, drill, drill about, "Is that developmentally appropriate? Is it active? Is it multi-

modal?" Those are *good aspects of teaching*, so I'm okay with those pieces. (Sydna,

Interview, April 27, 2016)

During the interview and with the questionnaire Tara had many positive things to say

about the impact the edTPA has made. "As an assessment, the edTPA is '*just good teaching,'*

meaning that our candidates are totally prepared and are able to perform at high quality levels to

be proficient or higher on their edTPAs" (Questionnaire, April 30, 2016). During her interview

she said:

That once we really got into it and started looking at the content of the edTPA and what it

was requiring candidates to do, while it's a big undertaking, ultimately it assesses *good*

teaching. And so we were confident that what we're doing in our program, we will likely

need to adjust some things, but we're not necessarily teaching to a test because what the

edTPA is assessing is what we were already teaching. Because we were just preparing

them to be *good teachers*. (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Lastly, Helen mentioned this about the edTPA, "I think it's a really *good assessment* designed by

smart, well-intentioned people who want to make a positive difference" (Helen, Interview, May

3, 2016).

The expectation for good teaching has increased with higher levels of rigor, higher accountability and by the overall raising the bar for teacher candidates to complete student teaching and receive teaching licenses. Both Helen and Dorothy indicated the increase level of change over the past 10 years. Helen said:

We have gotten serious about the high expectations for this profession, and the trajectory of what that looks like from the beginning . . . They're just being exposed to so much more than I had ever thought of going through education, even, I've been here 10 years, how we were 10 years ago . . . I think it's helping us to keep up and make sure that we have a lot of rigor, so they're going off in the field and they're ready. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

And, Dorothy said:

They're just being exposed to so much more than I had ever thought of going through education, even, I've been here 10 years, how we were 10 years ago. And I think education, that's important for the field because that's what they're expecting, but I think it's helping us to keep up and make sure that we have a lot of rigor, so they're going off in the field and they're ready,

Participants described that the edTPA's impact was one of clarity. Much of what the edTPA is asking the candidates to do, was being done in all three institutions represented in the study, but made the expectations for pre-service teachers clearer. Helen explained:

The high bar of this profession, not that everybody didn't have a high bar, but they got to decide what the bar looked like. And I think we have a common understanding of it, what it looks like at least in terms of planning, teaching, and assessing. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

The requirements have been increased for the candidates, Sonja said:

> I think part of that has come from us raising the bar for their expectations of the type of analysis that they need to do early on, whether it's watching a video of someone else teaching and then analyzing it, and then doing some more small group teaching and collecting data, starting that sooner. So I think that's been a positive outcome.

Anne stated that the edTPA has raised the bar for her within her courses when she said, "our assignments and our teaching in those course methods courses has gotten better, because of edTPA" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016).

The edTPA has impacted good teaching but it has also increased the communicative skills and the candidate's ability to articulate their practice. Helen described the previous frustrations, "we used to have that great frustration about candidates not able to articulate what we knew they knew, what we knew they had done" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). Since the edTPA has been implemented, Helen said, "Putting together a meaningful portfolio like this, has elevated their [teacher candidates] ability to speak about their choices and their practice" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). Anne made a similar comment about her candidates:

> Well, we want new teachers to be able to talk about their data. And so I think that's something that... EdTPA is a very data-driven kind of process; they have to think about what their students need, they have to do some pre-assessments and see where their students are, and then they have to plan, and instruct, and then analyze what they get. And so I think that EdTPA has forced us to think, not that we weren't doing that before, but think about that a little more stronger and make sure that our candidates really can talk about data. (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016)

Some of the participants were explicit in describing the edTPA as good teaching, but were also explicit in describing that the assessment does not make a complete teacher, and the edTPA is only a portion or piece of what is needed to be address in a teacher education program. Sharon undoubtedly and assuredly explains, "edTPA is not the do all, be all, end all of assessments, and that there's more to being a teacher than just passing the edTPA" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016). Anne described a similar desire and the role of the edTPA as:

> What we want is that we are preparing candidates to be effective teachers once they get out here. I think EdTPA is a piece of that, but I don't know that any of our thinking has put it as, "Yes, we want our teacher candidates to pass it." But I don't think that we've put it on this pedestal that it has overtaken what our mission and goal is. We still want our teacher candidates to be in diverse settings, and we still want them to be able to communicate and collaborate, and we still want them to be able to problem solve and use good practice when they're in the field, and EdTPA is just a piece of that. (River Valley Focus Group, May 4, 2016)

Helen very emphatically described what she thinks about the role of the edTPA:

> Everything is not about the edTPA . . . our language has been very intentional about, we know that these effective practices align but we are intentional about not creating candidates who think that their job is to pass the edTPA. It's that they think their job is to be an effective teacher. And I don't think we can discount the consequential nature of this assessment, and so that's looming always about that past. But I don't think our candidates have lost sight of what it's really about or for because I think the way we talk about it is about teaching, not about passing. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Sharon indicated the same line of thinking when she said:

There's a common philosophy that there's more to being a teacher than just passing the

edTPA . . . So the edTPA is not technically the only capstone project that the candidates

do . . . our unit focus is on the heart of the teachers. So we offer these experiences like

the Chrysalis Retreat that gets to, like why are you here in the heart of a teacher and that's

part of that what is the effect of teacher, and so I think those threads still run through.

(Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Although the theme *good teaching* shows a high level esteem for the edTPA, there were

participants who did not indicate the edTPA as *good teaching* and continue to remain skeptical

of the exam and its place in the field of education. Through the interviews and the focus group

interviews, the feelings toward the edTPA ranged from going from a negative view point of the

edTPA to a positive one as the participants went through the *evolving process* documented

earlier. Although most participants consider the edTPA as *good teaching*, Rex, Alexander, and

Olivia, remained to have a less enthusiastic view of the edTPA and its positive impact. Rex's

comments indicate that the changes the edTPA has made in his program may be detrimental to

his physical education candidates. Alexander remained skeptical of the corporatizing issues the

edTPA brings to teacher education. Alexander mentioned some positive changes the edTPA has

made within his program, but remained hesitant about the national expansion of the edTPA and

the effect of the edTPA is having on a larger scale. Olivia felt as if it was still too early to give

an evaluation for the impact the edTPA is making within her teacher education program.

<div align="center">**Summary**</div>

In this chapter, I presented the findings from this transcendental phenomenological study

employed by Moustakas's (1994) model. The qualitative software NVivo offered the ability to

organize, code, and theme the data accurately. Through the use of the questionnaire and the

individual interview, the identification and background of the 12 participants were presented. This chapter also captured a summary of each of the three focus group interviews and highlighted the actions and thoughts that each institution had as they prepared and implemented the edTPA. The participants represented three different teacher education programs from undergraduate institutions whom recently have been required to adopt the edTPA for teacher candidate state licensure. The participants represented a cross section of educational experience, teacher education experience, and content expertise. Five themes emerged within the four research questions. With the assistance of NVivo, the codes were developed, reworked, merged, and organized into families and connected to the research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to examine the experiences of university faculty tasked with implementing the edTPA within a teacher preparation program. The 12 participants came from three different universities, and brought a wide range of educational experience and teacher education experience to this study. A questionnaire, interview, and focus group interview were the three data collection tools. Moustakas'(1994) transcendental phenomenological model and NVivo qualitative software provided the tools to capture the participants' shared, lived experiences with the phenomenon of preparing for and implementing the edTPA. This chapter begins with the summary of the findings by examining the five themes found within the four research questions and then provides the implications in light of the relevant literature. Lastly, the chapter explores the study's limitations, and concludes with the recommendations for future research and a summary of the chapter.

Summary of Findings

A review of the literature related to the edTPA revealed a gap with the challenges teacher education faculty members face when preparing and implementing the edTPA in a teacher preparation program. The current study contributes to the missing literature by giving a voice to the teacher education faculty and allows one to hear about their journey in preparing and implementing the principles of the edTPA. In this phenomenological study, I collected data from 12 teacher education faculty members who have a wide range of educational experience and teacher education experience. Through the use of a questionnaire, an interview, and a focus group interview I was able to explore this study's central research question— what stories do

university faculty have to tell about their experiences with preparing and implementing the edTPA into their teacher preparation program? Through those stories I was able to capture the shared experiences of the phenomenon. During data analysis, the data were transcribed, coded, re-worked, and then merged into families. The codes were then organized within the families by the four attendant research questions. Five themes were identified. The four attendant research questions that guided this study represent a concise summary of the findings.

Research Question One

The 12 participants in the study acknowledged that it takes time to make sense of the edTPA. Many of the first reactions of the edTPA were negative. The participants were overwhelmed with the amount of work that needed to be done to get prepared, and questioned whether the high stakes of this assessment that was imposed by the state would really happen. Participants fell within three different tiers in their reactions and attitudes toward the edTPA. The first tier embraced the edTPA, began working on preparation immediately, and had a relatively positive attitude toward its adoption. The second tier was ambivalent and had many questions about the validity, the cost, how the edTPA would be scored, who was benefitting from this, and what it meant for them as professors in teacher education. The participants within this second tier also made multiple references to "waiting it out," and were concerned with putting in a great deal of time and energy into something that was not really going to stick. The third tier were described as dismissive, angry, or totally against the high stakes that come with assessment. At one institution a story was told how a faculty member would physically change his posture when the edTPA was being discussed. At another institution, multiple participants explained how the edTPA pushed three faculty members to (early) retirement.

To make sense of the edTPA the participants described attending national, state, and

regional conferences. Some attended in-house meetings (at their institution), webinars, and

learned about it through online resources. A big contributing factor to the success of making

sense of the edTPA was through a liaison, described as the edTPA coordinator. Many

participants recognized someone from their institution who was the "go-to" residential expert

who helps with clarity and answering questions.

 Two major themes emerged from this research question—*evolving process* and

academic language. As the participants learned about different pieces of the edTPA, they

became more comfortable with it. Each of the participants was witness to some growth as

professors and responded that time was needed to let the process take shape. Rex said,

"Obviously it is very time consuming to try to learn the process and even after three years I still

don't feel like I'm an expert" (Rex, Interview, April 29, 2016).

All 12 participants acknowledged some obstacles and challenges they met along the way

while making sense of the edTPA. Those obstacles and challenges evolved or changed over

time. One of the challenges that still persists is academic language, the second theme identified

in the study. Throughout the data, academic language continued to be the source of struggle and

confusion for many participants. Even some of the participants who are very knowledgeable and

are official edTPA scorers, or are considered edTPA experts struggle with the academic language

component. For example Helen said, "Academic language…it's a nut we have not cracked with

confidence. It's not that we're completely incapable, but we are not in a position to confidently

implement strategies for our candidates" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Research Question Two

Participant responses demonstrated a wid**e** range of strategies employed to prepare for the

adoption of the edTPA. As mentioned earlier (a) national conferences, (b) state & regional

conferences, (c) webinars, (d) professional development workshops, (e) in-house meetings, (f) online tutorials and instructions, and (g) personal reading were all ways that the participants prepared themselves for the edTPA. The one strategy that was recognized as a theme described by the participants was *local and official scoring*. Helen described local evaluation scoring as "the best way to engage in conversation and unpack the rubrics" (Helen, Interview, May 4, 2016). Local evaluation scoring provided the participants the opportunity to unpack the edTPA, engage with the rubrics, look at student work samples, and capture the essence of the edTPA.

Many of the participants (seven of the 12) also mentioned participating in official scoring as a form of preparation for the edTPA. Going through the official scoring training offered some of the participants the ability to thoroughly examine the edTPA with expert trainer's guidance and support. Multiple participants who are considered very experienced educators did not qualify to officially score edTPA's during their first attempt. A dean at one of the institutions represented in the study recommended that all of the faculty within their teacher preparation program go through the official scoring training offered by Pearson. Being an official scorer can be very demanding, but also very rewarding, especially someone who is learning the ins and outs of the edTPA. Olivia said in reference to official scoring, "I felt really prepared… doing the Pearson training accelerated my preparation…it was really valuable" (Olivia, Interview, April 27, 2016). Becoming a scorer is a very rigorous process.

Research Question Three

The major theme that emerged when discussing the implementation of the edTPA is embed into the coursework. Educational leaders from each of the institutions organized committees and delegated point persons (edTPA coordinators) to focus on the edTPA implementation. The participants at all three institutions recognized the need to (a) add new

courses, (b) revise current courses, (c) add new edTPA focused assignments, (d) revise current assignments to contain edTPA components, (e) offer a course that is offered concurrently with student teaching where edTPA supports are offered, (f) offer boot camps, (g) build in practice edTPA opportunities or a mini edTPA, (h) add opportunities for candidates to develop video-taping skills, (i) develop a program wide lesson plan, and (j) map out where the components of the edTPA are introduced, and developed throughout the program. The final element of the implementation that continues from year to year is evaluation. Participants described using the candidate's local evaluation scores and official scores to inform them of the weaknesses and strengths and ultimately to further inform their process in preparing teacher candidates.

Embedding the edTPA into the coursework is what it means to implement the edTPA. It was described as a major undertaking for each of the teacher preparation programs represented in the study. But many of the edTPA components were aligned to what the institutions were already doing. Participants described that they were already preparing candidates for planning, instruction, and assessment. The edTPA offers some new elements as well, including (a) components additional to what was already being done, (b) a higher level of rigor, and (c) a common language that can be used between programs.

Research Question Four

The participants in this study describe the edTPA as good teaching. When analyzing the data this common theme emerged as the participants were describing their perception of the edTPA. The edTPA is described by the participants as: "what good teaching is and looks like" (Sharon), "it measures good teaching" (Anne), "it assesses good teaching" (Tara), "the basic tenants of it are good practice" (Sydna), and "it's a really good assessment" (Helen). The participants positively describe the impact the edTPA has made, and recognize the assessment is

raising the bar within their program or as Helen indicated, "decide what the bar looked like" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). The higher degree of rigor and the higher standards candidates are required to meet have made an impact on good teaching. The participants recognized the level of growth they have seen in their candidate's ability to articulate their teaching in comparison to candidates from the past. For example, candidates now have the skills to talk about research and theory, about their data, about assessment, and have a better understanding for the way and type of feedback that can be offered during the assessment of students.

While the participants believed the edTPA was making a difference and called it good teaching, it was clear that in the participating professors' opinion, successful completion of the edTPA does not guarantee a good teacher. Sharon summarizes this idea when she said, "edTPA is not the do all, be all, end all of assessments, and there is more to being a teacher that passing a test" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016). Participants recognize the edTPA is an important element within their program, but it is only one piece of many pieces that make an effective teacher.

Below, Figure 2 illustrates the summary of the findings. The four colors from left to right illustrate the process a teacher educator takes in understanding the edTPA. The dark blue part of the illustration shows that making sense of the edTPA is an *evolving process* and was described at first as overwhelming, the participants and their colleagues were skeptical, they had many questions, and some consider waiting it out until the requirement goes away. Then the light blue squares illustrates the participant's preparation for the assessment. The participants prepared in many ways. Through their edTPA coordinator, at national, state, and regional conferences, and through in-house meetings and webinars. A theme from this study indicated that local and official scoring was the best way for the participants to prepare for the edTPA. Then the dark

green squares illustrate how the participants described the implementation of the edTPA into their programs. The participants curriculum mapped and developed scaffolds across their programs, they added new courses and revised old courses, they created new assignments, and the developed a mini edTPA. These implementation strategies were communicated in the theme *embed into the coursework*. Evaluation, the last part of the process did not emerge as a theme, but participants from each university mentioned how the process was not over after embedding the edTPA into the courses, but further described how continued evaluation was necessary to the implementation process. As the participants went through the process of understanding the edTPA, they came to find that the edTPA was *good teaching* as indicated by the light green oval. Finally, the bottom green arrow shows another theme found in the study—*academic language.* It illustrates that the participants are still making sense of this component of the edTPA. The arrow indicates that the understanding of academic language is ongoing.
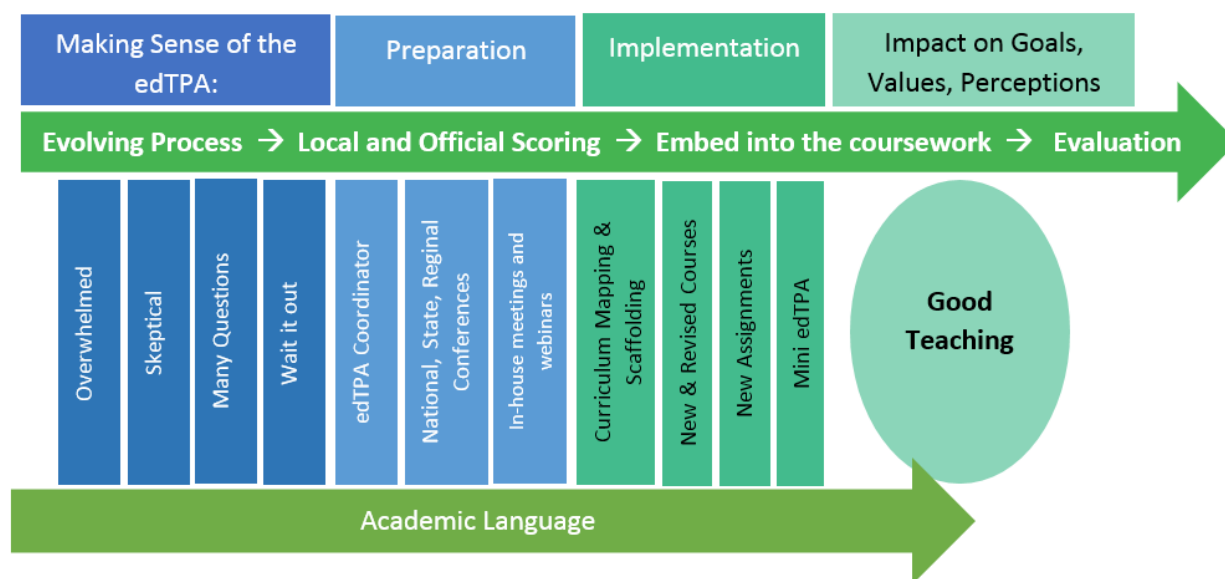

Figure 2. Summary of findings

Discussion

The discussion section reports the connection between the findings of the study and the literature that set the foundation for the study. The five identified themes from the study include, evolving process, academic language, local and official scoring, embed into the coursework, and good teaching. The outcomes of this study are consistent with Peck et al.'s (2010) study that reported the substantial changes in the way that the programs operated when implementing the PACT.

Evolving Process

The participants of this study provided insight on the evolving process a teacher education faculty member takes when adopting the edTPA. When making sense of the edTPA there is an evolving process of concerns, understandings, questions, challenges, and preparations made. The findings from this study are consistent with Sawchuck's (2013) study and confirms the need for time to allow for the evolving process of preparing faculty members and institutions and implementing the edTPA throughout a teacher preparation program. In the process of learning about and preparing candidates for the edTPA, faculty have the opportunity to learn and to invigorate their programs for teacher candidates (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016).

Robinson (2014) quoted E. Sutton Flynt, director of teacher education and professor of literacy at the University of Memphis noting that, "not all faculty members were ready for the changes brought on by performance based assessment...four years ago. But support grew as faculty saw more portfolios and candidate videos and learned where candidates did not perform well" (Robinson, 2014, p. 26). The faculty experience at University of Memphis is similar to the faculty in this study. Some of the participants first reacted to the edTPA with negative feelings, negative concerns, and negative questions. The reactions to the high stakes nature of the edTPA

was seen through my participants' responses as combative or defensive. However, as the
interview questions moved to the process of preparation to implementation, the negative feelings
and reactions of the edTPA tended to dissolve. For the participants in the study, they examine
the edTPA with a critical and in some cases a skeptical eye, but as time passed, support grew.

A comparison of the adoption of the edTPA between the state of New York and the state
of Washington illustrates how time can be an indicator for successful adoption of the edTPA
(Meuwissen et al., 2015). Washington adopted the edTPA in 2009 and required the candidates to
pass for licensure in January, 2014. The state of New York adopted the edTPA in 2012 and
required the passing of the edTPA for certification in 2014. Meuwissen et al. (2015) suggests
that the State of New York did not allow enough time for the evolving process to take shape and
were required to take the steps necessary to implement a safety net policy which would
provisionally certify teacher candidates who failed the edTPA during the initial year of testing if
they completed New York's predecessor to the edTPA, the written Assessment of Teaching
Skills. With only one year of field testing from 2012-2013, concerns among the institutions of
higher education and prospective teachers "still evolving edTPA policy landscape" (Meuwissen
et al., 2015, p. 5) led New York's leaders to adopt a safety net policy for candidates who failed
the edTPA. Meuwissen et al. (2015) stated:

> The differences among New York and Washington respondents on a number of questions
> suggest that edTPA's expeditious rollout in New York State may have had negative
> consequences for pre-service teachers there. Over two-thirds of participating New
> Yorkers indicated that they had not been informed about the edTPA early in their
> programs. (p. 12)

The suggestions from Meuwissen et al. (2015) and the theme from this study—*evolving process* align. It was suggested that, "States using edTPA for certification consider a rollout model that looks more like Washington's than New York's" (Meuwissen et al., 2015, p. 2). This will allow for proper preparation and implementation for all stakeholders including institutions, faculty members, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and pre-service teachers and will foster their understanding of the assessment and its conceivable consequences before it becomes high-stakes. Further, the candidates in Washington, where the rollout was gradual, reported a greater understanding and preparation than those in New York, where the adoption of the edTPA was relatively rapid (Meuwissen et al., 2015).

The amount of time institutions have to prepare and implement the edTPA can depend on the use or the level of consequence of the edTPA. As mentioned in chapter one of this study, states or institutions set their own policies, passing score requirements, and choose the amount of time given prior to consequential scoring. Some states (i.e. California, Delaware, and Iowa) have created policies which allow institutions to choose between the edTPA or another assessment. Minnesota currently uses the edTPA to measure teacher preparation program effectiveness. States like Illinois, New York, and Washington use the edTPA in a high stakes format by requiring the passing of edTPA for teacher licensure (AACTE, 2016).

In states where the edTPA does not have a policy regarding the edTPA, institutions develop their own timelines and requirements. At Eastern Carolina University in North Carolina, they went from pilot to full implementation in three years; University of Tennessee, Knoxville adopted the edTPA in 2011 and required the edTPA for graduation in 2014 (three years); Illinois State University explored the edTPA for four years before the state required using the edTPA for teacher licensure (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016). All three institutions

represented in this study took three years or more to prepare for and implement the edTPA

before the assessment was used as a state teacher licensure requirement. These finding suggest

that policymakers and educational leaders should allow for at least three years of time between

initial adoption and full implementation to allow for proper faculty preparation and

implementation of the edTPA.

The participants' recommendations are in concert with the literature that recommends a

pilot stage as one of the steps of the evolving process. Sonja suggested, "Every institution

should pilot the edTPA" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016) and Helen said during her focus

group, "We piloted so early that we weren't initially feeling pressure about the consequential

piece" (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016). Jeanette offered a timeline for how the pilot

program worked at her institution. She said, "By that first year, they piloted with just four

student volunteers…The next year, it was all one subject matter and then by the third year,

everybody was piloting it" (Jeannette, Interview, April 27, 2016). As described in the literature,

Girtz (2014) wrote, "One advantage of beginning pilot efforts early was that programs could

make gradual changes to align to the content of the assessment through annual modifications to

better support candidates and their chances for success on the high stakes evaluation" (p. 75).

An (2016) described the early stages of preparing for the edTPA as, "During these years, faculty

members were invited or required to participate in program revision, syllabus rewriting, and

attending edTPA-related meetings, trainings, and workshops" (p. 21).

The findings from this study confirm the need of an edTPA expert or point person

(officially titled, edTPA coordinator) to guide their institution. Participants in this study noted

how they received extensive professional development and understanding about the edTPA from

their edTPA expert. Alexander stated, "One aspect of edTPA preparations at our university is

we have one faculty member who really knows the edTPA well . . . rather than really understand

the process ourselves we just go to the experts who are willing to help us" (Alexander, Interview,

April 25, 2016). In some cases the edTPA coordinator role is a full time position tasked with

providing support and professional development to faculty and program leaders (Pecheone

&Whittaker, 2016).

 "Making a go of the edTPA has led to an unprecedented degree of collegial conversation

and collaboration across teacher education programs" (Adkins, 2016, p. 57). The collaboration

between institutions was another thread of the evolving process. Dorothy stated, "I think we

were really fortunate because a lot of the faculty were connected to other people at different

colleges" (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016). Sonja offered the same advice when she said,

"My advice is find out what other institutions are doing and borrow ideas from each other."

Similarly, Anne wished there was more collaboration between institutions. She elaborated:

>I just wish that there really was more collaboration with the institutions earlier on so we
>
>could kind of pool our resources and brainstorm a little bit and get ideas from other places
>
>so that maybe we were not reinventing the wheel, or instituting some of those things that
>
>we've recently heard earlier or whatever that might be. (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Finally, teacher preparation programs have needed to evolve over time, simply because

the edTPA has evolved over time. As Adkins (2016) described, "The developers of the edTPA

followed a theory of action to develop a sound prototype, field-test it, gather extensive user

feedback to inform changes" (p. 56). Teacher preparation programs needed to be flexible

enough to be able to change as updates and new versions of the edTPA handbooks and rubrics

are made. Both Helen and Sharon addressed the evolving edTPA. Helen said:

So much has changed. So one of the things I guess I wish I had learned first is that a lot

of the things that are in place now weren't in place when we started. And so, those

problems have ironed out over the improvement of the edTPA. (Helen, Stonebridge

Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Similarly, Sharon wished for the same understanding. She explained:

I wish that I had realized that things were going to be changing. Because, I mean the

handbook has been revised three times now. And then first thing is they were together,

and then they were apart, and then they've changed the rubrics, and things like that. And

so I wish that I would've known that they were going to be making revisions to it as it

went along, because I think that would've lowered my anxiety level. (Sharon, Stonebridge

Interview, May 3, 2016)

Because the edTPA is a relatively new assessment, changes have been ongoing. It can be

expected that the number of updates and the size of those changes will diminish over time.

Though those changes may slow down, it will not take away from time that is needed for the

faculty to go through the evolving process of making sense of the edTPA.

Academic Language

There are two elements of language teacher educators explore when preparing and

implementing the edTPA. The first requires the teacher educators to become experts in

academic language themselves so they can in turn use academic language and also teach the

candidates to integrate academic language throughout each of the three tasks; a requirement of

the edTPA. The second requires the teacher educator to become familiar with the overall

language and vernacular of the edTPA that is used to navigate the handbook, the prompts within

each task, the rubrics, the understanding level progression rubrics, and other edTPA materials.

While the participants were preparing and implementing the edTPA, many reported difficulties with academic language. Helen stated, "Really, the things we still cannot wrap our hands around, our heads around . . . I would say on top of that list is academic language" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). Many participants described that academic language is an area of the edTPA that they still struggle with. "Academic language is still an area that I really struggle with that I still struggle making sense of" (Tara, Interview, April 27, 2016).

There is confusion regarding the words that are used with the academic language requirements. Dorothy elaborated, "The way in which the teacher is defining syntax and discourse and teach it to our students... So I think there was a lot of confusion there" (Dorothy, Interview, May 27, 2016). Tara described it this way, "What exactly is discourse in my content area and what exactly is syntax in my content area? And then how do I translate that to teach it in a way that makes sense to my candidates" (Tara, Interview, May 27, 2016). In the previous quote Tara made reference to another struggle with academic language. The academic language that is expected for one content area is different from another content area. Anne also elaborated on this thought:

> I think, especially when you've got so many different disciplines because all of the handbooks are vastly different too, do you know what I mean? So the elementary literacy in math or the combined requires different academic language components than the special ed and the early childhood. And sometimes elementary and early childhood students sit together in the same class. (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016)

This struggle is consistent with the literature. Madeloni and Hoogstraten (2013) reported that her position as teacher educator was compromised as a result of modifying her vocabulary with her Massachusetts teacher candidates to try to prepare them for the edTPA. Because the

faculty are experiencing difficulty with academic language the teacher candidates are certain to have difficulty as well. Greenblatt (2016) stated:

> My teacher candidates spend a lot of time trying to figure out the difference between such terms as language function ("the content and language focus of the learning task"); literacy strategy ("an approach selected deliberately by a reader or writer to comprehend or compose text") and central focus ("description of the important understandings and core concepts that you want students to develop")—when sometimes all three are the same. (p. 53)

Candidate's struggling with academic language is not a concept that is new with the edTPA. Peck and McDonald (2013) offer examples of how institutions were impacted by the PACT, the predecessor to the edTPA, and indicate academic language was also an area that candidates struggled with. Most of the institutions in the state "had considerable difficulty integrating considerations around academic language" (Peck & McDonald, 2013, p. 17). Wiechman (2013) study also indicated candidate confusion with academic language with the TPA. Wiechman suggests further integration of academic language into teacher preparation programs.

Another criticism of the academic language component is that it is complicating an already complicated assessment, because the elements as they are described in the edTPA do not exist in the field. Alexander described it this way, "Some of the things that we require for passing edTPA like, understanding the specific edTPA definition of syntax . . . Those seem to be things that maybe aren't that important for teaching" (Inverness Focus Group, May 3, 2016). Anne agreed, she said in the questionnaire, "Much of the language is confusing for students and not used by teachers in the field the way it is for edTPA (syntax, discourse, etc.)" (Anne,

Questionnaire, April 25, 2016). During his interview, Alexander also elaborated on this same

thought:

> I'd say a problem in the field of education and that is the use of jargon or the use of fancy
>
> educational terminology to describe simple things. So we talk about requiring students to
>
> talk about discourse and syntax in their edTPAs. It's, there's an over complication that
>
> we're making it a complex job of teaching over complicated with words that we're not
>
> defining well. So it's already a difficult job but we're putting in, I don't know, fancy
>
> sounding words that I think are just an odd aspect of the educational world right now.
>
> (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016)

The participants and the literature have expressed the struggle with academic language,

and questioned its purpose. Therefore, the literature that was used in the development of the

edTPA was analyzed to find what led to the necessity of having academic language as a

requirement in all three tasks of the edTPA. The sources used for this analysis came from the

bibliography SCALE released presenting the "research literature that informs the development of

edTPA and its rationale as a performance-based assessment for preservice teacher candidates'

readiness to teach" (SCALE, 2015, p. 2).

Galguera (2011) recognizes the need and the challenge to meet the needs of English

language learners. Contrary though, he recommends that teacher educators move away from

using the term "English learners," but rather use "language use for academic purposes" to assist

teacher candidates in examining their practice. In his self-study, Galguera (2011) attempts to

foster academic language usage among pre-service teachers. He recommends academic

language use as another form of pedagogical content knowledge. Nagy and Townsend (2012)

examine the research on academic language, academic vocabulary, general academic words, and

discipline specific words and offer recommendations on how to continue inquiry and improve

practice in that area. According to Schleppegrell (2012) success in school calls for using

language in new ways. He introduces "insights into the challenges and affordances of

developing academic language and suggests implications for pedagogy, teacher education, and

further research" (SCALE, 2015, p. 26). Snow and Uccelli (2009) reported the challenges of

academic language, but not the same challenges that were found within this present study.

Spycher (2009) views academic language through the lens of a science class and

examined the effectiveness of an "intentional verses an implicit approach" to oral language

development in children. The study suggests that with explicit vocabulary instruction students

will know more of the vocabulary expressed and understand the scientific concepts more

effectively. Townsend, Filippini, Collins and Biancarosa's (2012) study offered empirical

support for the wide range of vocabulary knowledge and general academic word knowledge of

339 seventh and eighth grade students. Their study calls for providing academic language

support for early adolescents from non-native English speaking and low-socioeconomic

backgrounds. Zwiers (2007) reported, "Academic language and higher-order thinking skills are

closely linked and classroom discourse patterns and activities both develop and impede language

growth" (p. 93). This study indicated growth in the students understanding and language, but

also demonstrated how students will learn "rules of school" or "play the game of school" (p.

113-114) that are counterproductive.

Zwiers (2008) continues to build the literature on academic language and its essential

practices for learning in all content areas. He described how teachers can build language abilities

for content reading and writing. He emphasizes how teachers can build on students' way of

communicating and how they can model and scaffold academic language in teachers' daily

practice. Zwiers (2014) demonstrates how the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) requires students to understand language in sophisticated ways and how content classrooms (science, math, history and language) can improve students' language and thinking abilities to meet those standards.

There appears to be no explication in the literature that explains why pre-service teacher's need to show the skills to use academic language in the classroom. However, this defense does not resolve the manner in which academic language is used across multiple content areas. Nor does it indicate how academic language ought to be taught to pre-services teachers across disciplines and age ranges. Furthermore, the literature does not indicate, how academic language is taught to experienced educators and educational leaders. It is concerning that this struggle has carried over from the PACT (Peck & McDonald, 2013) and has continued to be realized in the edTPA. Helen described her view on what is needed by faculty to teach academic language. She elaborated:

> It [academic language] may be good and it may make great sense, but if I can't access it with how much I'm trying, and I then I can't share it well with our faculty who cannot share it well with their candidates, then it's moot because we're not getting it out. So you're gonna have to either, I think, change what you're asking or change the way you're asking for it. I know it's important. And I think... I will say our program is already improved in terms of supporting language in a way that we didn't before, but not to the, I think, sophistication that perhaps these rubrics are looking for. So, that would be the challenge. Honestly, I think its understanding what's expected around particularly academic language. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

One of the participants indicated that some of the confusion with academic language can be explained by the discrepancy between SCALE's (2015) definition of syntax and discourse and a traditional understanding of syntax and discourse. In SCALE's (2015) Elementary Literacy Handbook it defines syntax as, "The set of conventions for organizing symbols, words, and phrases together into structures (e.g., sentences, graphs, tables)" (p. 47). Representing the traditional view of terms in question, Merriam-Webster.com (2016) defines syntax as, "The way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/syntax). Next, in SCALE's (2015) Elementary Literacy Handbook it defines discourse as:

> The structures of written and oral language, as well as how members of the discipline talk, write, and participate in knowledge construction. Discipline-specific discourse has distinctive features or ways of structuring oral or written language (text structures) that provide useful ways for the content to be communicated (p. 46).

According to Merriam-Webster.com (2016) the definition of discourse is, "the use of words to exchange thoughts and ideas; and a long talk or piece of writing about a subject" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discourse). In the comparison above, SCALE's definition of each of the required elements of the edTPA are different from the mainstream definitions of each word.

Additionally, how the candidates demonstrate the use of syntax and discourse among other language demands is not easily decoded. The edTPA rubrics four and 14 from the SCALE's (2015) Elementary Literacy Handbook are used to evaluate a candidate's use of academic language. Rubric four requires the candidate to demonstrate the ability to "identify and support discourse or syntax associated with the learning task" (p. 17) and in rubric 14 they

are required to demonstrate how they "analyze the students' use of discourse or syntax to develop understanding" (p. 35). The participants of the present study suggest that academic language requirements are difficult to decipher and is a major challenge to teach to preservice teachers.

The participants also reported that the overall language of the edTPA can be difficult to decode. Dorothy said it rather concisely when she said, "I spent some time, and I think we all have done that, really spending some time. What does this language actually mean" (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016)? The literature supports this question. Greenblatt (2016) shares her concerns about the difficulties with the language of the edTPA. "The test's language and writing demands are cumbersome—and even more so for those who are not native English speakers" (p. 53). Sonja described the use of language when she said:

> We have assignments and things that we need to explain in the edTPA language, and then our college supervisors and our cooperating teachers, especially when we have someone new, that's a cooperating a teacher for us or a new supervisor, kind of catching them up when we do have these workshops, but I think that's something that's . . . Because we're in it, it's easier for us. We've had training and we've gone to things for years, so I think that's one thing that's missing. (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Miller et al. (2015) reported that the candidates at one university in Washington had difficulty translating the language of the edTPA task prompts to the design of the lesson plans in the learning segment. They suggest using the backwards design, scaffolding and breaking down the prompts by linking them to the candidate's development of their instructional units during the coursework. This suggestion was similar to how Helen supports her candidates. She stated,

We still had a bit of a tug around language because there are different ways to different

vocabulary for lesson planning. And with our mind of making candidates comfortable

and confident, there's a conscious effort to make the language in our template aligned

with the edTPA language. So candidates know, are you gonna say outcome or are you

gonna say objective, different things. (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016)

Further, Peck et al. (2014) suggested the need to build a "common and concrete language of

practice and argue for the importance of establishing such a language for the professionalization

of teaching" (p. 12). Tara agreed with this line of thinking when she said,

I think looking more globally beyond just our program though, I think that it's given us a

common language between our program and somebody else's program. So that when we

go to conferences and we go to workshops and we talk to people from other institutions,

it's that common language that really brings us together . . . I think that it provides better

opportunities for us to engage in deeper conversations about what's happening in our

programs instead of focusing on the nuances that are differences between the programs.

(Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

Interestingly, the common language described above is linked in the literature to the next

theme from the study—local and official scoring. According to Peck et al. (2014) they stated:

In examining the emerging literature on the implementation of standardized teacher

performance assessments in programs of pre-service teacher education, we are struck by

the recurring reference to the ways in which faculty and staff participation in the training

and scoring activities related to evaluation of candidate work samples can foster

development of a "common language" among program participants (p. 18).

The edTPA has been described a catalyst for change.

Local and Official Scoring

There are some significant differences between local evaluation scoring and official scoring. When evaluating an edTPA using local scoring methods the assessor will score each of the 15 rubrics with a scale of one to three, indicating emerging performance, proficient performance, or advanced performance. Tara mentioned this scoring language during the focus group. She said:

> If it's a one or a two, we're gonna call that emerging, and if it's a three, we're gonna call that proficient, and if it's higher than a three, we'll call it advanced. And I think that was quite a learning process, was the local evaluation. And sometimes we would do our local evaluations together, if I remember correctly. (Stonebridge Focus Group, May 9, 2016)

When evaluating an edTPA using official scoring methods an assessor will score each rubric with a wider scale of one to five. A level one score indicates a performance that is "beginning with knowledge and skills of novice not ready to teach" and level five indicates a performance that is "extending to the advanced practices of a highly accomplished beginner" (edTPA Early Childhood Handbook, 2015, p. 4). Local evaluation scoring does not result in official scoring. Official scoring involves many different protocols, processes, and purposes. The purpose of official scoring is to justify a score, whereas, the purpose of local evaluation is based on learning about candidate performance (Sloan, Merino, & Harvey, 2015).

The act of locally evaluating candidates can cause a professor to question the preparation of the candidate, but also to question whether or not "This scoring experience has forced me to revisit the question of what really matters in the assessment of teachers, which—in turn means revisiting the question of what really matters in the preparation of teachers." (Darling-Hammond, 2013 p. 23-24). The above quote is from a teacher educator who makes a similar claim to what

is suggested in this study. The literature supports the third theme of this study—local and official scoring, used in preparing for the implementation of the edTPA. There are several studies in the literature that reflect faculty learning through the scoring of performance assessments such as TWS, PACT, TPA, and edTPA (Peck et al., 2010; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Peck, Muzzo, & Sexton, 2012; Peck et al., 2014). Vanderbilt's (2016) article geared toward early childhood teacher educators encouraged faculty to become scorers when she wrote, "Faculty who score edTPA know edTPA" (para. 6). Vanderbilt's suggestion is consistent with the present study's participants experience when preparing for the edTPA. They felt as if scoring the edTPA locally or officially was the best way to prepare themselves for the adoption of the edTPA at their institution.

The participants described that each institution began the adoption of the edTPA with a pilot program with a small sample of candidates completing the edTPA and then transitioning to a larger pilot until all candidates in the program were required to complete the edTPA. During the pilot process local score evaluation was completed on the portfolio's submitted in-house. Sharon described this process, "So, before it went consequential for those two or three years that we had them doing the edTPA but they weren't all going to Pearson, we had in-house scoring" (Sharon, Interview, May 3, 2016). Initially, only a handful of faculty were trained with local evaluation scoring and at some point all of the faculty were trained. Helen described what happened at her institution, "I think our first real pointed embracement across the college was when everybody had to go through local evaluation training and evaluated portfolios" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

Peck et al. (2010) suggested that when faculty score and interpret candidate work samples at the local level, they develop the ability to negotiate programmatic change. According to Peck

et al. (2014) the examination of teacher performance assessments "affords significant opportunities for faculty learning and program improvement" (p. 14) individually and collectively. Further, the results from locally scored PACT portfolios found faculty were surprised and were given insights beyond the candidate's performance on the assessment. After faculty scoring events they were able to hone in on what the candidates were getting and not getting (Peck & McDonald, 2013).

The participants in this study described the collaboration and the calibration that takes place during the local evaluation scoring process. Erin elaborated:

> Walking ourselves through the different tasks of the edTPA, looking at the rubrics, trying to make sense as a group of what each rubric was looking for. And then, what was the most helpful was when our work samples started coming in because then we were able to start assessing those work samples in house (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016).

As the participants were learning how to score, having another faculty member score a portfolio a second time helped each of the participants build a sense of confidence when scoring edTPA portfolios. Dorothy explained:

> We had our students start before they actually submitted for real scores, we had them submitting, and we would score and then we'd have someone else score. And then we'd say, "What's our reliability as a department?" and all of those kinds of things…I think our reliability with one another ended up to be pretty good. (Dorothy, Interview, April 27, 2016)

This is supported in the literature and described as *collaborative analysis.* The data that is reviewed within a teacher performance assessment allow "faculty to learn more about other pieces of the program and to integrate the work they were doing in specific courses or

supervision settings with a larger and more comprehensive understanding of what candidates

needed" (Peck et al., 2014, p. 15).

Calibration with one another was an important part of the training, and calibration with

Pearson showed the institution where their local scoring efforts may have been erroneous. Helen

described, "We stuck with local evaluations. So we would always send a few portfolios off for

official scoring just to see if we could calibrate ourselves a little bit. And I personally felt like

our local evaluation process was very uncalibrated" (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016). All of the

institutions described having someone from their institution who were officially trained scorers

to assist with the calibration process. Sonja stated, "Working with the faculty who did go

through the formal [official] training, they helped the rest of the faculty understand the process a

little bit more" (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016).

Two main veins of literature exist on official scoring. The first, is mostly a description of

official scoring, scoring qualifications and expectations commonly cited by SCALE, and

AACTE. For example, a common view of official scoring is that the eligibility standards for

those who score the edTPA are very strict. "They [scorers] complete a rigorous training program

to understand the rubric level progression and to learn to map evidence" (Adkins, 2016, p. 57).

The second vein of literature that points to official scoring is authored by opponents of the

edTPA and criticizes the use of official scoring. Some of the criticisms include, the cost of the

scoring of the assessment, the judgement of distant scorers, the expertise of scorers, the potential

for bias scoring, the inter-rater reliability of scoring, and the corporatizing Teacher Education

(Dover et al., 2015a; Greenblatt, 2016; Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013; Singer, 2014). For

example, Dover et al. (2015a) argues against the strict rigorous training idea explaining that they

were offered an official scoring position after a six-minute phone call. Greenblatt (2016) makes

the argument about the use of distant scorers and the differences between the official scorer and the person who knows the candidate. She argues, "Even if cooperating teachers and field supervisors recommend students, the candidates are not certified without passing the edTPA, effectively minimizing the role of the professionals" (Greenblatt, 2016, p. 54). A possible reason for official scoring to become the theme for this research is because those interested in participating in the study were well versed in the edTPA due to their scorer training and therefore felt confident or more interested in participating because of their official scoring background.

Embed into the Coursework

The theme, *embed into the coursework*, suggests that embedding the components of the edTPA into the coursework is what it means to implement the edTPA. Embed into the coursework, was the fourth theme of this study. It is the theme that created the most dialogue and resulted in more codes than any other theme during the data analysis. Further, this theme is supported by the literature and is a common practice among teacher education faculty and teacher preparation programs. There are multiple studies that examine teacher performance assessment implementation (Bunch et al., 2009; Ledwell & Oyler, 2016; Lys, L'Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock, 2014; Meuwissen et al., 2015; Peck et al., 2010; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Peck et al., 2014; Ruesser, Butler, Symonds, Vetter, & Wall, 2007). Additionally, SCALE promoted the embedding of the edTPA into the coursework and faculty are encouraged to help candidates "practice the activities of edTPA prior to their student teaching semester, to develop edTPA-related seminars, and to use edTPA rubrics to guide instruction" (SCALE, 2014, p. 1–2).

Due to the high stakes nature of the edTPA, and the sheer size of the project, the participants recognized the need to make program wide changes, individual course changes, and align the courses they offer with the components of the edTPA. These recognized changes align

with the comments scholars have made about the PACT and edTPA being developed to function as catalyst for change in teacher education (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016; Pecheone & Chung, 2006). Although much of what was already being taught within the participants programs was aligned with the edTPA, some priorities shifted, major components were added, and a change in the language as mentioned earlier in the study, was addressed. For example, Elanor said, "[The edTPA] changed what we consider important for preparing student teachers" (Elanor, April 27, 2016). Anne's response was similar, "We recognized that it was really important for our candidates to experience similar kinds of activities in their methods courses to what they would be doing when they were student teaching" (Anne, Interview, April 27, 2016). These redesign efforts described by the participants are consistent with the efforts of others who have completed a redesign process to better enable candidates to learn key skills and knowledge (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; Lys, et al., 2014;Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016; Rosenberg & Walther-Thomas, 2014).

Ledwell and Oyler (2016) found a large range of curriculum change from the 12 programs in their study. Most programs made level one changes which are described as "peripheral, superficial, and semantic" type changes (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016, p. 127). Some institutions made level two changes which are characterized as changes that "did not involve any new curriculum focus, but paid attention to deepening, extending or resequencing existing content" (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016, p. 127). Five programs in their study were described as making level three changes, which included:

The creation of new edTPA-aligned program assessments, the addition of content that had not previously been addressed through program curricula such as specific attention to the vocabulary of differentiated instruction, and a repurposing of the student teaching

seminar to concentrate on edTPA preparation and completion. (Ledwell & Oyler, 2016,

p. 127)

The participants in this study addressed course additions, curriculum changes, and

documented priorities through participation in curriculum mapping events to map out and

scaffold the components of the edTPA throughout the program. Sydna explained:

We have four programs we're licensed for, early childhood, elementary, Special Ed and

secondary. So each of those programs looked at their sequence of courses, and we did a

cross-walk, basically, with the courses that are offered, and then the content of the

edTPA, so that we could be sure that we were introducing and obviously, developing, and

our students were becoming proficient with the skills that would be required in the

edTPA. (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016)

Miller et al. (2015) described the challenge of the curriculum mapping that takes place when

implementing the edTPA. Miller et al. posit, "A challenge faced by many teacher-education

programs is how to successfully prepare candidates towards the rigorous requirements of edTPA

while maintaining a core emphasis on preparing teachers for powerful pedagogies and ambitious

teaching" (p. 38). Lys et al., (2014) recommend that teacher preparation programs "Create a

curriculum map connecting specific components of planning, teaching, and assessment that leads

to the final product" (p. 9). Additionally, Ledwell and Oyler's (2016) study described earlier in

this section, caution the amount of change that takes place when embedding a teacher

performance assessment into the coursework. Teacher educators in their study reported:

Making edTPA-related curriculum changes with a range of reactions, from pride and

satisfaction to distress and regret. For two of the 12 programs in our study, teacher

educators reported curricular improvements, particularly in regard to greater attention to

matters of formative assessment. However, other programs sacrificed valued curriculum content (such as action research projects) to make room for the high-stakes mandate. We are interested in inquiring more deeply into why some teacher educators were willing to sacrifice long-standing projects that had previously been integral to their programs, particularly those teacher educators who did not see tremendous value in the edTPA.

(Ledwell & Oyler, 2016, p. 130-131)

Parkes and Powell (2015) criticize the effect of the change in the curricula and argue that the use of the edTPA "has begun to have a negative effect on teacher education curricula and on the type of teaching that teacher educators undertake" (Parkes & Powell, 2015, p. 109).

The participants' and the literature's description of *embed into the coursework* suggest multiple pathways for implementation of components of the edTPA or other teacher performance assessments into a program, but three implementation methods stand out: (1) offering products or projects, like a mini edTPA (Girtz, 2014; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Meuwissen et al., 2015), (2) leveraging in-class assignments and group discussions regarding the edTPA's specific expectations and demands (Adkins et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; Girtz, 2014; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Ledwell & Oyler, 2016; Meuwissen et al., 2015; Miller et al., 2015; Navickas, 2016; Robinson, 2014; Wei & Pecheone, 2010), and (3) offering a seminar, boot camps, or workshops dedicated to edTPA preparation (Girtz, 2014; Ledwell & Oyler, 2016; Meuwissen et al., 2015; Miller et al., 2015; Navickas, 2016; Robinson, 2014). Other pathways for implementation include, (a) watching and analyzing videos of teaching, (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Meuwissen et al., 2015), (b) offering a post-degree edTPA course for graduates to receive a supervised placement and complete the edTPA (Greenblatt, 2016) and (c) developing a program wide lesson plan template for candidates to follow (Miller et al., 2015).

The literature supports the embedding of the edTPA within the course work and aligning the edTPA. Pecheone and Whittaker (2016) showcase five universities and their work with the edTPA. For example, Niagara University reviewed its curriculum to ensure alignment between program expectations, existing assignments, and edTPA. Navickas (2016) described how the faculty in Illinois State's educator preparation program revised their program's content to meet the evolving needs of the profession and to align their candidates work with the Danielson Framework in light of the edTPA.

When the participants described implementing edTPA components into the coursework they used the local and official scores to determine the areas of weakness and the areas of strength. Sonja described how her candidates were weakest in the assessment task of providing their students with appropriate feedback (Sonja, Interview, April 27, 2016). Similarly, Vanderbilt University's teacher educators revised coursework and field assignments when the assessment revealed that candidates had difficulty analyzing student work and giving students usable feedback (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013). Alexander described emphasizing the research and theory components in his assignments to help his candidates build those skills for the edTPA (Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). After examining her students edTPA's, Olivia found that her candidates are weak in the pre-assessment areas of the edTPA and thinks she needs to build instruction in planning assessments (Olivia, Interview, April 25, 2016). Olivia's comments are very similar to those of E. Sutton Flynt, the director of teacher education and professor of literacy at University of Memphis. He stated:

> We've added a course in student assessment, which was a weakness that edTPA revealed to us. We've also gotten rid of a lot of theory and are closer to the ground with what it

takes to work in a real school setting, he says. Some faculty are taking the lead. They are

vested in what it really means to teach children today. (Robinson, 2014, p. 26)

The qualitative analysis and evaluation of the assignments, artifacts and projects offer very

concrete implications for action. As one instructor put it, "We are finally looking at student

work and really pinpointing some of the areas that need to be dealt with" (Peck et al., 2010, p.

457). Other institutions have found the results from the edTPA score reports "extremely valuable

for highlighting areas of strength and areas we need additional focus" (Adkins, 2016, p. 56).

Another part of the theme *embed into the coursework* described by the participants and

the literature was the developing of constructs and proper supports for the candidates

understanding of the edTPA and the successful completion of the edTPA (Darling-Hammond et

al., 2012). Sydna described her experience in building supports when she stated, "We've looked

at different activities in terms, or different events and different schedules, and maybe different

timelines that would provide support to our teacher candidates in order to actually complete the

edTPA while they're student teaching" (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016). Helen described the

type of supports she gave, "I would meet with every student teacher the semester prior just to

give them an overview, and get them comfortable with the language and the expectations and

honestly trying to set a tone of confidence for them and anticipation of what they'll gain from this

experience (Helen, Interview, May 3, 2016).

It was recognized that proper supports needed to be embedded throughout each of the

programs. One of the participants described feeling "handcuffed" in offering the proper supports

he wanted to give his candidates. Alexander explained, "Knowing exactly what sorts of supports

to provide, it very much felt like a handcuffed process. I would love to support my student

thinking through this process in a free way that would actually help the student in their teaching"

(Alexander, Interview, April 25, 2016). These type of teacher preparation adjustments and supports are what the candidates from Meuwissen et al.'s (2015) study suggest for their program to add more clarity about the completion of the edTPA. Some of the suggestions indicate that teacher educators assist the candidates in the unpacking the edTPA handbook's prompts and rubrics and support them in the understanding of the language and the indicators of the different levels of performance. Meuwissen et al. (2015) was also suggested that teacher educators dedicate more instructional time to discussing the particular implications and nuances of the edTPA and align the course assignments with edTPA's evaluation criteria.

Miller et al. (2015) concurs with those suggestions as they describe how they provide explicit opportunities for preservice teachers to learn with and from each other and engage with their colleagues in edTPA-like tasks prior to assessment and during their student teaching experience. Further, Hildebrandt and Swanson (2014) propose that program directors should consider early preparation with edTPA in field practicum coursework and they should consider "establishing timelines and extending the student teaching experience, program coordinators can further support candidates' success by helping them to become more familiar with the assessments themselves" (p. 587).

Good Teaching

The final theme of this study, *good teaching*, describes the participant's perceptions, goals, priorities and values in training teacher candidates. The participants suggest the edTPA measures good teaching, and raises the bar for teacher preparation programs in the training of pre-service teachers. Anne said, "I think the concept of edTPA is good - because it measures good teaching" (Questionnaire, April 25, 2016). Similarly, Tara stated, "The edTPA just assesses good teaching. And, so what it's done for me is it's provided a very clear framework

and a very clear set of guidelines of what constitutes good teaching" (Tara, Interview, May 3, 2016). When describing the basic tenants of the edTPA, Sydna described the edTPA as good practice and what the early childhood edTPA is asking for are "good aspects of teaching" (Sydna, Interview, April 27, 2016). The perceptions and opinions regarding the edTPA and other similar teacher performance assessments are consistent with the literature.

According to Fenstermacher and Richardson (2005) good teaching refers to the teaching that agrees with morally defensible and rationally sound principles of instructional practice. Similarly, successful teaching refers to teaching and that yields the intended learning. Parkes and Powell (2015) point to Columbia University's Teacher College when comparing good teaching and successful teaching. They stated:

> Teaching is a highly complex practice, and what constitutes quality remains contested. We know that successful teaching is not the same as good teaching, and we know that terms like *success* and *good* are dependent on context and culture. In light of this complexity, the criteria for assessors are surprisingly underdeveloped and point to a technical, rather than holistic and humanistic, understanding of education. (Parkes and Powell, 2015, p. 108-109)

Shulman (2007) described a good teacher as one who operated on four concurrent dimensions— intellectual, practical, emotional, and moral. Devine, Fahie, and McGillicuddy's (2013) study described five factors of good teaching. They include: (1) passion for teaching and learning, (2) social and moral dimension, (3) reflective practitioner, (4) effective planning and management of learning, and (5) love for children (Devine et al., 2013, p. 92). Sato (2014) stated, "In the past 20 years, discussions about teaching quality have shifted from a discourse of defining "good"

teaching through the establishment of performance standards to creating processes for evaluating teaching through performance assessments" (Sato, 2014, p. 421).

Other literature has described the edTPA and other teacher performance assessments as good teaching. Darling-Hammond and Hyler's (2013) study indicates that faculty members, instructors, supervisors, cooperating teachers, and principals in partnership schools, learn about good teaching through the scoring of the PACT. Similarly, two institutional self-studies of the implementations of a teacher performance assessment indicated faculty concerns about the loss of control, the studies concluded that the implementation of the assessment had a positive impact on the institution and on the curriculum (Barron, 2015; Gainsburg & Ericson, 2015). Pecheone and Whittaker (2016) cite Benner & Wishart (2015) showing that 'edTPA scores predict candidates' ratings of teacher effectiveness as measured by the state valued-added composite score that combines students' performance data and classroom observations. "Bottom line, I would say that for us edTPA is about making a good program better," Wishart said (Pecheone & Whittaker, 2016, p. 11).

According to Meuwissen et al. (2015), they suggested that the "edTPA's tenets are consistent with their and their teacher education program's conceptions of good teaching" (p. 2). Pecheone and Whittaker's (2016) research indicates that Eastern Carolina University used the edTPA to recognize that their candidate's "good teaching practice was not as strong as they wanted and took necessary steps to change that" (p. 13). Likewise, Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) concluded that:

> The edTPA is a valid assessment of some valued aspects of teaching, although there is no evidence to date that the edTPA itself predicts effectiveness. Implementation of the edTPA has the potential to prompt professional learning for candidates, programs, and

institutions under certain conditions: alignment of edTPA and program/institutional goals and values, adequate institutional leadership and capacity building, and gradual supported implementation. (p. 15)

Another consistency between the participants and the literature is the similarities of the edTPA to the National Board Certification for Teachers. Reichardt (2001) stated, "National Board Certification (NBC) provides a vision of good teaching and serves as a tool to direct individual teacher professional development" (p. 13). In the present study, Dorothy, Alexander, and Jeannette, likened the edTPA to the NBC which may provide a similar vision of good teaching and serve as a tool to direct pre-service teacher development. Reichardt (2001) also stated there is evidence that the NBC is a method that improves teacher quality, a question still unknown is if the edTPA will improve teacher quality as well.

However, there are others who argue and criticize the assessment and disagree that the assessment is good teaching. Madeloni and Gorlewski (2013) argue against the use of the edTPA mentioning it as a devaluation of the interactions in quality teaching. They cite that it distracts away from social justice education and it corporatizes teacher education. Parkes and Powell (2015) suggest the edTPA should be put on hold until research can establish a relationship between success on the edTPA and success as a teacher. Dover and Schultz (2016) argue that teacher performance assessments like the edTPA corrupt the preparation process and take away from the rigor and accountability that the local evaluation of candidate readiness offered in the past. Some of these criticisms are shared by the participants. Earlier in the chapter, it was mentioned how Alexander felt "handcuffed" in the kind of support he could offer his student teachers. Alexander's view of how the edTPA corporatizes teacher education is similar to Madeloni and Gorlewski's (2013) view. Rex expressed similar comments as Dover and

Schultz (2016). During his interview he explained multiple times how the edTPA is big, time consuming, and takes a lot away from his candidate's student teaching experience.

Implications

The results of this study illustrated five themes regarding the preparation and implementation of the edTPA among teacher educators. With the emergence of the factors that positively and negatively influenced the preparation and implementation of the edTPA, there were several practical implications for policymakers, performance assessment developers, university deans and chairs, edTPA coordinators, and teacher education faculty.

Policymakers

The use of the edTPA and the policies that accompany the assessment continue to grow. The AACTE website (http://edTPA.aacte.org) state policy page states,

> The long term expectation is that institutions of higher education, state education boards and professional standards boards throughout the United States will adopt the edTPA as a mandatory requirement for the award of an education degree and/or for teacher licensure." (AACTE, 2016, para.1)

Since 2013, 12 states either have put a policy in place or are considering such policies. AACTE (2016) also indicates that 40 states have at least one institution using the edTPA within its education program. With the expectation of more states creating statewide policy or the development of a national policy, educational leaders must be mindful of the time that is needed for the teacher education faculty to prepare and implement the edTPA. Even when the edTPA is already aligned with much of what educational preparation programs do, the dissemination of information and the preparation and implementation of the edTPA, as indicated in this study, is

an evolving process. This study suggests policymakers allow at least for three full years for

teacher preparation programs and its faculty to prepare and implement the edTPA.

The present study implies that it is important that university leaders and teacher education

faculty have an opportunity to attend national, state, and regional conferences, attend

professional development workshops, have in-house meetings and most importantly, have the

opportunity to attend local and official scoring workshops and trainings. Additionally, teacher

preparation programs need to have the time necessary to embed the edTPA throughout the

program and into the individual courses.

The adoption of the edTPA was described by most participants as overwhelming.

Although it is recognized that many of the resources and supports that were not originally in

place, are now available, some of the participants from the study indicate that after two to three

years of preparing and implementing, they do not feel like experts with the edTPA.

Performance Assessment Developers

The participants in this study identified academic language as a component of the edTPA

that is not clearly defined or understood for all disciplines. The use of academic language was

also described in the literature as a source of confusion with the PACT, a predecessor to the

edTPA. Additionally, the participants have described the required academic language use in the

edTPA as fancy jargon that is not used in the field and is making the assessment unnecessarily

complicated. Although the literature indicates the importance of academic language use in

education, the format and use of it continues to be a source of confusion among teacher

educators and teacher candidates. The results from this study suggest the teacher performance

developers engage the teacher education faculty with additional clarity through additional

resources, trainings, and workshops, about the use of academic language in each individual

content area and discipline. Performance assessment developers need to consider not only teaching the teacher educators the ins and outs of academic language, but also teaching and offering resources on how to teach academic language in the varying disciplines. Considerations should also be made to present teachers in the field who use the academic language components required in the assessment (i.e. language demands, language function, syntax, and discourse) on a regular basis to improve the perception of academic language in the field and to create a stronger connection of the assessment to the use of its components in the field.

Future performance assessment developers should consider the challenges the edTPA developers have experienced with the large scale implementation of the edTPA and academic language and design supports for those like teacher education faculty who are required to interpret complex components that are not easily understood, especially when they are expected to disseminate the understanding of academic language across multiple content areas.

University Deans and Chairs

The participants from this study acknowledge the involvement and decision making made by their superiors that assisted in their understanding and ability to prepare and implement the edTPA and therefore were able do their job better. The participants spoke of their leaders as visionaries, having the ability to foresee the educational changes on the horizon and able to prepare their program for any major program requirement changes. Consistent with the literature, multiple participants began the adoption of the edTPA with a negative view of the edTPA. They were skeptical, sometimes angry, and there were many questions that accompanied the amount of change the edTPA brought to their program. Deans and chairs should consider the evolving process described in this study and allow time for the dissemination of information and natural steps of preparation and implementation of the edTPA. As with

policymakers, deans and department chairs need to give their teacher education faculty the opportunity and the resources to attend national, state, and regional conferences, attend professional development workshops to assist with their understanding of the edTPA.

Deans and chairs could consider having regularly scheduled in-house meetings that will assist in the dissemination of knowledge and on-going discussions that are necessary to unpack and understand the edTPA. Most importantly, based on this study and the relevant literature, create ways for the faculty to attend local and official scoring workshops and trainings. The literature and the participants from this study suggests to consider requiring the teacher education faculty to score portfolios collectively and collaboratively. In result, this action may lead to program improvements, programmatic changes, and may assist in the faculty's growth of confidence in the edTPA and in their own abilities.

Further, teacher preparation programs need to have the time necessary to embed the edTPA throughout the program and into the individual courses. The participants suggest hosting curriculum mapping events to allow for the scaffolding of edTPA components and the alignment of edTPA component to the already existing curriculum within the program. The literature recognizes that programs range in the amount of changes that are necessary within their program.

Each institution represented in this study appointed a point person or edTPA coordinator to become the resident expert on the edTPA. This person is instrumental and contributes to the building the confidence that teacher educators need to move forward. By taking on the edTPA coordinator role, he or she will be given a voice to address and promote the edTPA when needed and will assist the program's needs as they arise. Deans and chairs may also consider putting together a committee or a team of people that includes the edTPA coordinator, that will help with

edTPA support and assist the institution as it navigates the complexities the edTPA preparation and implementation brings.

edTPA Coordinators

The participants in this study indicated that edTPA coordinators were a vital part of their development and success when preparing and implementing the edTPA. The participants from this study would agree with the literature's recommendation that all institutions should assign a person to take on the role of edTPA coordinator or at least have an in-house expert available. edTPA coordinators who are given the task of preparing the faculty and assist with edTPA implementation need to consider the *evolving process* as described in this study. Anyone in this position should expect other faculty members to exhibit negative attitudes toward the edTPA during the early stages of adoption. The edTPA coordinator is generally heavily involved in the preparation, training and professional development of other faculty members. The participants in this study suggest that local and official score evaluation to be considered as one of the most important training events at your institution. When completing local evaluation the participants and the literature together recommend local scoring to be completed collaboratively. Also, any opportunity to increase the input about academic language would be beneficial to the faculty in your program. edTPA coordinators are likely to be heavily involved in assisting the faculty in embedding the edTPA in the coursework throughout the program. The participants suggest aligning the current coursework with the components of the edTPA and curriculum map and scaffold all of 15 rubrics throughout the program, indicating where candidates are introduced to the edTPA, have the ability to develop in their understanding in the edTPA, and then have the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in the edTPA.

Teacher Education Faculty

   The participants understood the edTPA as good teaching and were working to leverage the edTPA to increase the level of teaching ability of their candidates. Teacher educators will benefit from knowing that the adoption of the edTPA is an evolving process. At first examination, the edTPA will feel overwhelming, but has the potential to grow in favor as faculty become more familiar with its components. Consequently, the participants indicated that the academic language components of the edTPA have a higher level of complexity than the other components. Teacher educators should consider taking advantage of every opportunity to engage in conferences and workshops on the topic academic language.

   The participants reported that the most important part of their training included local and official scoring. This study revealed that unpacking the edTPA is done best when looking at candidate work samples alongside the rubrics. Additionally, the literature shows that completing local evaluation collaboratively with a colleague is not only beneficial for one's understanding of the edTPA, but it may also be a catalyst for program or course improvements.

   The implication that may require the most effort from teacher educators relates to the implementation of the edTPA by embedding the edTPA into the coursework. Earlier in the chapter, it was recommended to deans and chairs to host curriculum mapping events with the purpose of distributing components of the edTPA throughout the program. During those events teacher educators will have an opportunity to consider which elements of the edTPA fit within their course content. The participants revealed that candidates have a deeper understanding language of the edTPA and what is expected of their performance if they have had the opportunity to practice and develop those skills prior to student teaching and prior to the completion of the edTPA.

In addition, the introduction the edTPA presents opportunities for teacher candidates and faculty members to consider the philosophical and practical question: "What is (good) teaching?" As discussed earlier this question is answered in various ways. Such a question is appropriate for teacher candidates to consider, and fits well within a teacher induction program. As various components of the edTPA are "rolled out" into the curriculum, the question may be continually revisited, so that teacher candidates and faculty alike may consider the critical question: "Does the edTPA lead to good teaching, and by which standards?"

Study Limitations

As mentioned in chapter one of this study the limitations to this study include the inability to generalize due to the purposive sampling, the sample size, and the geographic location. The sample may not be representative of the teacher educators from each institution, in the state, or in teacher education in general. The study included four participants from each institution. However, other faculty from different disciplines and different programs within each teacher preparation program may have provided different perspectives related to the preparation and implementation of the edTPA. Additionally, the characteristics of the faculty used from the institutions may not transfer to other institutions that serve larger or smaller institutions or have less or more resources that are needed for the preparation and implementation of the edTPA. All of the participants from this study serve small, private institutions. This limits the voices that may have been heard from faculty who serve at larger institutions or public institutions.

To illustrate these limitations with more clarity, as mentioned in the discussion section, the theme of official scoring as an avenue for teacher educator preparedness was not supported by literature. A possible explanation for this theme was due to the particular faculty members who consented to participate in the study. When recruiting volunteers, it is possible that those

who have a stronger background with the edTPA (i.e. officially trained scorers) are more likely to participate than those who did not go through official scoring. Thus, when I asked about their preparation for the edTPA, the majority of my participants had been officially trained and that training became a large part of their preparation. Although official scorer training is an option for all teacher education faculty, this form of preparation is not required of all teacher educators. The researcher of good transcendental phenomenological study embraces *epoche* and brackets out their own voice. Although I worked very hard throughout the entire study to remain neutral with the participants and bracket my preconceptions, my close interactions with the participants, unconscious subtle hints, questions, or reactions or word choice usage in the manuscript may have been a limitation. Additionally, four of the participants used in the study are colleagues of mine at Inverness University. Because I was the edTPA coordinator and oversaw the preparation and implementation of the faculty at our institution, there is a possibility that these participants may not have been completely honest with their answers in the attempt to not offend me or create any conflict between our working relationships. In effort to partially offset this limitation, I asked these participants for their complete honesty and I told them that I would not be offended by any of their answers or perceptions they offered during the study. During the study, my colleagues did not seem inhibited when they answered the questionnaire or answered questions during the interviews, but it remains a limitation.

Recommendations for Future Research

Since this study is the only qualitative study in which faculty members who prepared for and implemented the edTPA were given the opportunity to tell their story there is much potential for further research. Considering that all of the institutions represented in this study were from small private universities, it is recommended that teacher education faculty from public

universities and larger universities be included in future research. During this study, I learned of a university with a large teacher education program who hired a full time edTPA coordinator to oversee its implementation—a luxury smaller colleges and universities cannot afford. This study was also limited to institutions from one state whose policies are described as high stakes and consequential. Repeating this study with faculty members from other states with similar or differing policies is recommended—what are the experiences of faculty in states where the outcome of the edTPA is not consequential or where the consequential nature does not equate to teacher licensure?

There were many similarities to how the institutions in the present study prepared and implemented the edTPA. Are there certain preparations or implementation strategies that benefit candidate's effectiveness with the edTPA? Likewise, which institutions have high success rates or high edTPA scores and what are they are doing that helps with their candidates success, and does that success follow the candidate into the field as a professional?

Academic language is documented in this study as confusing element of edTPA. Studies that unpack academic language within the context of the edTPA, across multiple content areas, would benefit the field of education. More details about the edTPA being referred to as good teaching can be explored. The question offered earlier in this study asked, "Does the edTPA lead to good teaching, and by which standards?" What the participants in this study meant by good teaching was not explicated. As shown, the literature has much to say about good teaching, but at this present time there is very little information that links the completion of the edTPA to good teaching.

Summary

This study contributes to the missing literature on the experiences of teacher educators when they prepare and implement the edTPA. The study allowed 12 teacher education faculty members to share their experiences on how they made sense of the edTPA, what it meant to prepare and implement the edTPA, and also to share how the edTPA has impacted them professionally. The study found that making sense of the edTPA is an *evolving process* and the most complex portion of the edTPA is *academic language*. This study also found that teacher educator's best prepare for the edTPA through the use of *local and official scoring*, and implementing the edTPA is done through *embedding it into the coursework*. Although the participants at first were overwhelmed with the edTPA, had many questions, and were skeptical of its use, the participants described the assessment as *good teaching* and revealed that it has assisted in the growth and development of their program. The findings of this transcendental phenomenological study suggest specific implications to policymakers, performance assessment developers, deans and chairs, edTPA coordinators, and teacher education faculty. This study provides a lens to the experiences of teacher education faculty as they prepare and implement the edTPA. As the edTPA continues to grow in its popularity and matures in its use across the country, and as the understanding of edTPA among teacher educators continues to evolve, continued research on teacher educators, their effectiveness, and their impact in preparing quality pre-service teachers is needed.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Email Correspondence with Andrea Whitaker from SCALE

From:	Andrea K. Whittaker
To:	Lance Kilpatrick
Subject:	Re: Request for clarity on edTPA acronym
Date:	Saturday, September 24, 2016 4:33:13 PM

Hello Lance,

Thanks for checking. edTPA is not an acronym it is a trademark name. Best of luck finishing your dissertation. Should you be willing, SCALE maintains a bibliography of edTPA related scholarship and can add a citation and abstract of your dissertation.

Andrea

On Sep 24, 2016, at 12:46 PM, Lance Kilpatrick ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ wrote:

Dear Dr. Andrea Whitaker,

My name is Lance Kilpatrick, I am an assistant professor at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ in Illinois and a doctoral candidate at Liberty University. I received your contact information from an edTPA colleague, Elisa Palmer at Illinois State University. I am currently finishing my dissertation on the edTPA and I am hoping you can provide a statement that would provide clarity to my manuscript.

In scholarly papers and studies, an acronym like edTPA would normally stand for something. Often times the edTPA is commonly referred to as "Educative Teacher Performance Assessment." Based on my studies and familiarity with the edTPA, I do not believe that is true, but I do not have a credible source indicating so. My understanding is that the edTPA is just edTPA.

Understandably, my dissertation chair and committee are asking that I offer what edTPA stands for or cite a credible source that indicates that it is not an acronym. If you can provide me with a statement or point me to the right literature, I would be very grateful. If you choose to answer with a statement, a copy of this email will be placed in the appendix of my study.

Thank you for your time,
Lance Kilpatrick

Appendix B

edTPA Resources from SCALE

Resource	Explanation	Main Audience
edTPA Annotated Bibliography (2015)	This annotated bibliography presents the research literature that informs the development of edTPA and its rationale as a performance based assessment for pre service teacher candidates' readiness to teach.	Institutions and Faculty
edTPA Implementation and Teacher Education Curriculum (n.d.)	This document offers frequently asked questions about the adoption of the edTPA, curriculum that supports the edTPA, avoiding "teaching to the test," standardized curriculum, underlying conceptions, etc.	Institutions and Faculty
27 subject specific edTPA handbooks (updated yearly)	Provide specific instructions on how to complete each of the tasks of the edTPA. It also includes the rubrics used to score each edTPA.	Teacher Candidates, Faculty, and Cooperating Teachers
Making Good Choices	Assist in developing a deeper understanding of the edTPA.	Teacher Candidates
edTPA Guidelines for Acceptable support	Clarifies the acceptable forms of support for candidates during the edTPA process.	Faculty and Cooperating Teachers
2013 edTPA Field Test: Summary Report (2013)	Summarizes key data and information based on several years of development and field testing.	Institutions and Faculty
Guidelines for edTPA Retake Decision-making and Support (2013)	Offers suggestions for supporting candidates who will retake the edTPA	Teacher Candidates and Faculty
edtpa.aacte.org	A website containing information about edTPA, state policies, resources, news, and "voices" from the field.	Everyone
2014 edTPA Administrative Report	A report on the first full year of edTPA implementation	Institutions and Faculty

Appendix C

IRB Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 14, 2016

Lance Kilpatrick
IRB Approval 2478.041416: The Experiences of University Faculty Expected to Implement the Education Teacher Performance Assessment within a Teacher Preparation Program

Dear Lance,

We are pleased to inform you that your study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

LIBERTY
UNIVERSITY.
Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971

Appendix D

Consent Form

The Experiences of University Faculty Expected to Implement the Education Teacher
Performance Assessment within a Teacher Preparation Program
Lance Kilpatrick
Liberty University
School of Education

Dear Participant,
You are invited to be in a research study that will examine the experiences of university faculty
expected to implement the Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) within a
teacher preparation program. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a
university faculty member who teaches in a teacher preparation program where the edTPA is
required for licensure. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before
agreeing to be in the study.

Lance Kilpatrick, a doctoral student in the School of Education at Liberty University, is conducting this
study.
Background Information:

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to examine the experiences of
university faculty expected to implement the Education Teacher Performance Assessment
(edTPA) within a teacher preparation program.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
1.) Complete an initial questionnaire (approximately 5 minutes to complete) within two weeks of
receipt.
2.) Meet with the researcher for a personal audio-recorded interview lasting approximately 30
minutes.
3.) Meet with the researcher and a focus group of other participants from your institution for an
audio-recorded discussion lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes.
*Participant identities will not be disclosed in the researcher's dissertation; pseudonyms will be
used to report the data collected.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The risks involved in this study are no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life.

There are no direct benefits to the participants, but there may be a benefit to society or other university
faculty who can use the information from the study to facilitate their preparation for edTPA
implementation.

Compensation:

You will receive no payment or compensation for taking part in this study.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. The following procedures will be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants:
1. All institutions will have pseudonyms
2. All participants will have pseudonyms
3. All data will be kept on a password protected computer and/or password protected device (iPad).
4. All audio recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet inside a locked office at the researcher's work.
5. All audio recordings will be used to contribute to the research and then destroyed after the three year retention period required by federal regulations.

Complete confidentiality of the study is limited due to the collaborative nature of the focus group interview. During the focus group interviews the participants will be asked to respect the privacy of the other participants in the group, but it cannot be assured the others will do so.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study:

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email or phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Lance Kilpatrick. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at email address or phone number. You may also contact the research's faculty advisor, Dr. Jerry Woodbridge, at email address.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E

Recruiting Letter

Dear Faculty Member,

My name is Lance Kilpatrick, I am an assistant professor at a University. I am currently working on my doctoral dissertation through Liberty University that will examine the experiences of university faculty expected to implement the edTPA within a teacher preparation program. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a university faculty member who teaches in a teacher preparation program where the edTPA is required for licensure. Attached to this email is a consent letter with more details and information about my study. If you are willing to participate in my study, I invite you to sign and return the consent form to me by mail, fax, in person, or by scanning it and sending it as an attachment through email (preferred). Once signed consent form is received you will receive a link to the questionnaire through email. I look forward to your response.

Thank you,
Lance Kilpatrick

Appendix F

Questionnaire

This questionnaire was given in an electronic format through Survey Monkey.

1. First and Last Name
2. Email Address
3. Gender _ Female _ Male

4. My ethnic/racial background is:
_ African/American _ Hispanic/American _ Asian/American
_ Native/American _ Caucasian/American _ Other (Specify)

5. I have been a teacher educator for:
_ 1-3 years _ 4-7 _ 8-11 _ 12-15 _ 16-19 _ More than 20

6. Which University do you serve:

7. Years with the University:

8. Title:

9. What (if any) was the capstone project for student teachers prior to the edTPA? Is it still in use?

10. What was your programs experience with teacher performance assessment prior to the edTPA?

11. Rate your programs preparedness for the edTPA for the fall of 2015?
      1 not prepared
      2 somewhat unprepared
      3 somewhat prepared
      4 very prepared.

12. Rate your level of involvement in preparing your department for edTPA?
      1 not involved
      2 somewhat uninvolved
      3 somewhat involved
      4 very involved

13. Rate your anxiety level about the edTPA?

1 not anxious
2 little anxiety
3 some anxiety
4 very anxious.

14. Rate what you think your candidates anxiety level is in completing the edTPA?
1 not anxious
2 little anxiety
3 some anxiety
4 very anxious.

15. Rate the level of impact that the edTPA has had on your program?
1 no positive impact
2 little positive impact
3 some positive impact
4 great positive impact

16. Has the edTPA made a positive or negative impact on your teacher candidates? Please explain.

17. What is your perception of the edTPA as a measure of novice teacher effectiveness?

Appendix G

Interview Questions

How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

1. What were your thoughts when you first learned about the edTPA?

2. How did your colleagues handle the news about the new state requirement?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?

3. Walk me through the preparation process for the edTPA?

4. What steps of professional development did you take to learn about the edTPA?

5. What steps of professional development were offered by the University to help you prepare yourself to lead teacher candidates through the edTPA?

6. What has been the largest obstacle in preparing for the edTPA?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

7. What did you specifically do in your course work to prepare teacher candidates for the edTPA?

8. How did the implementation of the edTPA at your institution make you feel?

How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perceptions, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

9. What impact has the edTPA made on you?

10. How has the edTPA affected your program?

11. What other stories you can tell me about the edTPA that may help me better understand the experience you went through?

Appendix H

Focus Group Questions

How does a teacher education faculty member make sense of the edTPA?

1. What were the first reactions from your department when you first learned about the consequential nature of the edTPA?

2. What do you know now you wish you had learned at first?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to prepare for the edTPA?

3. Walk me through your institution's preparation process?

4. How did your department go about training or preparing you (as a whole) for the edTPA?

5. What has been the largest obstacle for your program?

What does it mean for a teacher education faculty member to implement the edTPA?

6. Walk me though what implementing the edTPA has looked like for your program?

7. Explain how your program strategized on how to help your candidates pass the edTPA?

8. Some literature on the edTPA has illustrated how institutions may teach to the test or use a misaligned teaching strategies—what has your institution discussed regarding these topics?

How has the implementation of the edTPA impacted teacher educators' perception, goals, priorities, and values in training their teacher candidates?

9. What impact has the edTPA made on your teacher preparation program?

10. What impact has the edTPA made on your teacher candidates?

11. What priorities have changed due to the edTPA in your department?

12. What advice would you have for another program who is just now learning about the

edTPA?

13. What other stories you can tell me about the edTPA that may help me better

understand the experience you went through?

Appendix I

Enumeration Table

Codes	Sources	References	Themes by Research Question
Reaction to the edTPA	12	34	Research Question One: Evolving process and academic language
Academic Language	11	29	
edTPA expert or liaison	10	16	
Concerned experience or frustrations	10	14	
Overwhelmed	6	13	
Pilot Program	11	13	
Feelings	6	13	
Changing obstacles overtime	6	11	
Committee Work	6	10	
Wait it out	5	5	
High Stakes	2	2	
Faculty have no say	1	1	
edTPA training	16	45	Research Question Two: Local and official scoring
Local Score Evaluation	10	21	
Official Scoring training	10	20	
Time	9	20	
Professional Development	9	13	
Responsibility	4	6	
National Board Certification	4	6	
All the little details	3	3	
Building the plane	1	2	
Embed into the coursework	14	41	
Video Taping	13	22	
Supporting the candidate/student teacher	11	19	
Curriculum Mapping	8	13	
Using the edTPA Scores/Data	8	11	

Aligned the faculty	6	11	Research Question Three: Embed into the coursework
Collaborate with other institutions	6	10	
Component added due to the edTPA	2	10	
Boot Camp	6	9	
Aligned with what we're already doing	5	8	
Lesson Planning	5	7	
Updates to the edTPA	6	6	
Mini edTPA	4	6	
Pressure on student teachers	3	6	
Difficult component of the edTPA	1	5	
Rigor	4	4	
Research and Theory	3	4	
Preparation of Candidates	3	3	
Changes to the edTPA	1	3	
Timeline for Student teachers	1	1	
The edTPA is …	11	34	Research Question Four: Good teaching
Suggestions and Recommendations	8	16	
The State	9	14	
Changes from the past	7	13	
Raises the bar	7	12	
Reflection on Candidate Success	7	12	
Teach to the test	7	11	
Danielson Model	3	8	
Reliability	3	4	
Articulate Teaching	2	4	
Candidates look to the faculty	3	4	
Candidates were fearful	3	3	
Good amount of stress	2	2	
Ethical issues	1	2	
Performance	1	1	

Enhancements of the edTPA	1	1	
Staging	1	1	