# Preparing Teachers of Critical Languages for Articulated Performance Assessment Task Design

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## Abstract

This paper describes a Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Critical Languages Education program in a large, urban college with articulated assessment and curriculum design as a key feature of clinical coursework and practicum. Candidates design performance assessment across three formative levels of performance targets for articulation that is thematic and tangible across levels, buildings, and schools. With these assessments, learners solve novel problems and create products with a common contextual scenario across three levels of learner engagement. Exemplars for Korean and Hindi are featured along with an annotated blank model template.

## Introduction

This paper describes a secondary education certification program for teachers of critical languages and the Articulated Performance Assessment Task (APAT) learner cohort design model as a key component of the program. The National Security Education Program (NSEP) defines critical languages as non-Western European languages critical to U.S. national security, such as Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Russian and Urdu. STARTALK, a federally-funded initiative administered by the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) at the University of Maryland, has promoted summer programs for teacher training and student language learning in critical languages in K–16 educational settings and in heritage communities throughout the United States since 2007. These intensive teacher development experiences have served over 3000 teachers who need pathways to certification.  In 2008, STARTALK, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Asia Society organized a meeting titled "Meeting the Challenge of World Language Teacher Shortages." This meeting resulted in the white paper, *The teachers we need: Transforming world language education in the United States* (Ingold & Wang, 2010). The section, *A World Language Teacher Supply System for the 21st Century*, established a framework for addressing the national World Language teacher shortage and a call to action to redesign the world language teacher supply system: teacher certification programs. In addition to outlining a shortage of teachers in all languages, this paper specifically noted the lack of qualified teachers of less commonly taught languages, due to the fact that most teacher training programs traditionally certify mostly European languages for public school programs.

In response to the shortage of certified teachers of Critical Languages both locally and nationally and to address specific needs of the candidate pool, Queens College developed the Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Critical Languages Education in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Russian, and Urdu, approved for New York State licensure grades 7-12.  In designing the program, the faculty considered the following questions:

- What kind of teacher preparation is required for a heterogenous candidate pool that still must fulfill state requirements to attain and maintain licensure?

- What skills and competencies do Critical Language teachers need to be successful in their new and developing 7-12 programs?

**Program response to attract potential teachers we need**

Queens College, founded in 1937, is a public comprehensive university and senior college of the City University of New York. More than half of Queens College students are born overseas from nearly 170 countries and speak more than 110 languages. More than 40% are first-generation college students. The Division of Education offers over 100 certification programs accredited by their Specialized Professional Association (SPA). The Division of Education was first NCATE accredited in 2005 and was the first institution to be accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) in 2012. In New York State, teachers first earn initial certification allowing them to work, then upon three successful years of teaching and a Masters degree, they earn professional certification. In-service teachers must earn the Masters degree in a related area in order to maintain certification.

To address the needs of the diverse pool of candidates, flexibility is key. The MAT accepts both graduate candidates and high performing undergraduates in an accelerated track. Recognizing that many potential critical language teachers may be heritage speakers and career changers, the MAT in Critical Language Education is primarily designed for post-baccalaureate candidates who have any undergraduate degree. Contrary to previous models of language certification with language requirements based on numerous classes and seat time, Queens College post-baccalaureate candidates demonstrate language proficiency with scores of at least Advanced-Low on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and on the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) in the critical language for admission into the program. As with many other states, New York accepts these exams in lieu of content area credits. Candidates are also required to comply

with guidelines for accreditation (Foreign Language Teacher Preparation Standards Writing Team, 2013). As an incentive for undergraduates with a minor or major in the language to enter the profession, these candidates apply to the Accelerated Master of Arts in Teaching program. This allows candidates to take 12 graduate credits at the undergraduate tuition rate, continue after graduation to complete the remaining 12 initial certification requirements and then while in-service, complete 15 credits of coursework in fulfillment of the 39 credit MAT degree. These candidates must also score at least Advanced-Low on OPI and WPT in order to be eligible for the clinical student teaching phase. Courses are offered in late afternoon and evening to accommodate working schedules and many are offered as hybrid or partially online though synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

## Program response to needs of teachers developing new 7-12 programs

All Queens College teacher candidates take core coursework in Language, Literacy and Culture, Adolescent Educational Psychology, Foundations of Education, Cognition and Learning, and Special Education with 100 hours of aligned fieldwork required by New York State. Whereas most teacher certification programs require one semester of pedagogy and practicum, the initial certification phase at Queens College requires a full clinical year of dedicated world language curriculum, assessment, and instructional design. This clinical year also includes 100 hours of Initial Clinical Experience in the middle school and 350 hours of full-time student teaching in the high school.

The MAT in Critical Languages program recognizes the teacher as leader in their school building. As new programs emerge and then expand, critical language teachers are often the only ones in their school building responsible for their curriculum. Until the profession builds sufficient capacity, the critical language teacher will work alone or perhaps have one colleague teaching the same language, at best. For this reason, it becomes even more urgent that they are supported pre-service with tools on how to design articulated key assessments and plan curriculum backward from those

performance targets. In addition, if joining an established world language department, it is important that the critical language teacher can plan articulated curricula and assessments with other colleagues and participate fully in departmental or district curricular initiatives.

Articulation is defined as intentional and ongoing coordination of assessment and instruction between levels, buildings, and schools (Byrnes, 1990, 2008; Eddy, 2017; Pesola, 1988). Unlike other K-12 content areas that have grade level expectations, World Language programs have different entry and exit points and varying amounts of instructional time, either weekly or per class period. Coupled with that is a diverse understanding of assessment and the spiraling nature of language. Many classroom teachers are familiar with horizontal articulation, or a continuity of materials, methods, and expectations across the same level with similar goals (Lange, 1982). Most world language classroom teachers are accustomed to planning only for the level they teach and for their assigned courses. This results in a lack of understanding of vertical articulation and its direct relationship to well-designed assessments for the span of their curriculum. This issue pertains to all world language teachers, but for the critical language teacher-leader, this competency is essential to planning a new program.

## Articulated Performance Assessment Task (APAT) as cohort model for K-16 programs

During the initial certification clinical year, teacher candidates in the Queens College MAT program design thematic, performance-based assessments across three levels of engagement and performance targets, using the APAT template (Figure 1).
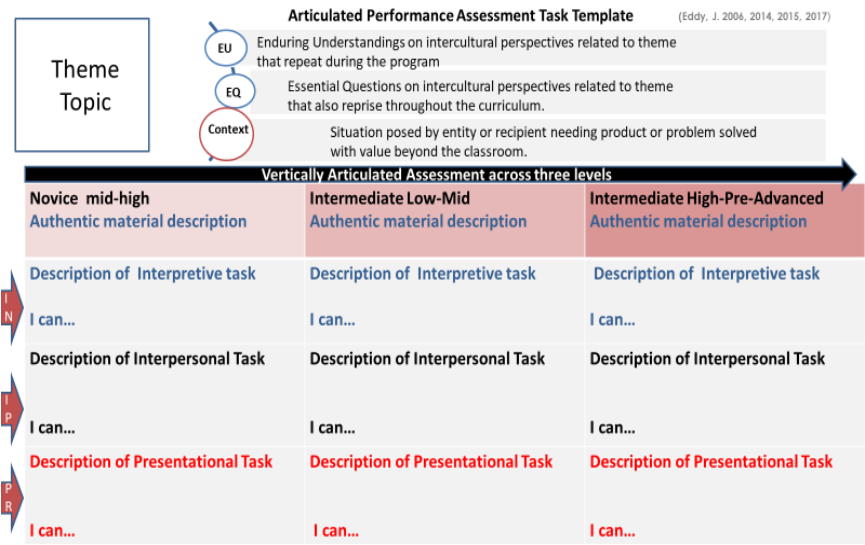
*Figure 1.* Articulated Performance Assessment Task Template. Adapted from "Unpacking the Standards for Transfer: Intercultural Competence by Design" by J. Eddy, 2017, NECTFL Review, Special Volume on Intercultural Competence for Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, p. 53. Copyright 2017 by the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Adapted with permission.

After selecting a theme (See Appendix A) and subtopic (NYSED, 1986; Eddy & Heller, 2018), teachers plan articulation across three levels of engagement with *Enduring Understandings (EUs) and Essential Questions (EQs)* (Mc Tighe & Wiggins, 2001/2005) as explained in the curriculum design model, *Uncovering Curriculum: Articulated Design Assessing Performance and Transfer* (revised from original UC:ADAPT: Eddy, 2006a/b, 2007a/b, 2014, 2015, 2017). In the curriculum design model, The EUs and EQs, constant throughout the curriculum, are vertical articulation paths for sustained inquiry on perspectives for intercultural competence (Bennett, 1986, 1993, 2004; Byram & Kramsch, 2008; Byrnes, 2008, 2010; Kramsch, 1993; Lange, D. & Paige M., 2000; Walsh, 1988).

A theme may have about six to seven Enduring Understandings that reprise and recur over a curriculum, unfolding the content through performance assessments which do change.

These EUs are relevant to understanding that theme or topic from the values, beliefs, ideas and viewpoint of the culture(s) studied. They start with "Students will understand that…" They are not finite as are objective statements of skills for a lesson or unit "Students will be able to…" Essential Questions are designed from the EUs and last not only for the length of the curriculum, but are revisited and answered differently as the learner acquires more experiences and adapts to life's changes. These EQs are not focus questions, which prompt review facts and skills at the end of a lesson, much like objective statements do at the onset. Both Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions transfer concepts inherent to the culture and applicable to life, in a way that facts and skills cannot do. In the example EU, "*Students will understand that environmental issues can impact how we practice cultural celebrations*" and the EQ, *"How is the individual responsible for their contribution to the health of their community?"* (See Appendix B)*,* the learner will see these for this unit but also see them resurface again at another point in the curriculum, perhaps addressing different content or another environmental issue or concern. The accompanying assessments of the APAT unfold and transfer these concepts further and deeper for different levels of learning engagement across three performance targets.

Because an articulated program needs to determine performance goals between levels, buildings, and schools (Couet, R., Duncan, G., Eddy, J., Met, M., Smith, M., Still, M., Tollefson, A., 2008), this curriculum design facilitates dialogue between instructors and provides continuity for vision and direction. In the MAT program, teachers compose Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions together as a class, modeling for them how to plan curriculum as part of a whole department with themes in common across languages or in collaboration with other disciplines. In this way, world language instructors can now contribute and integrate with other content areas also using Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions in a district-wide initiative.

The *Context* presents a new situation, opportunity, problem, or challenge that has value outside the classroom and relevance beyond self and teacher. It is not enough that learners ultimately

perform a presentational mode task for classroom use or one that merely repeats previously learned content. The learner must apply content in a new, unanticipated situation for an outside audience and adapt according to those specifications.  The Context always 1) states what that audience seeks or needs, 2) involves transfer (Eddy, 2006a, 2014; McTighe, 2013; McTighe & Wiggins, 2005) to solve a novel problem presenting complexities, variables, or use new materials the learner has not seen before, and 3) does not reveal the details on how to solve the problem or create the product implied in the task. For example, "An environmental organization seeks informational material for a 'green' Diwali to help people stay healthy during the celebration" (See Appendix B.)   It is through the subsequent performance assessment tasks that the learner solves the Context problem or creates relevant products.

**The APAT Cohort Assessment System**
        The Context is the framer for the APAT cohort system. Learners from all levels respond to the Context problem together as a cohort, but at their level of engagement. They receive the Context day one or the night before the onset of the unit. The tasks at each target level contribute to the same Context, and serve to solve the product or create the product outlined therein. These tasks can be formative or summative and are implemented between different levels, buildings, and schools. The cohort model ensures that learners have a common goal and purpose: they all know they are working toward the same Context for the task together with common EUs and EQs no matter where a learner is along the curricular continuum. The APAT template can also be used within one classroom where differentiation is needed, since many classes of critical languages have multi-levels within one classroom. The tasks change; the EUs and EQs remain the same, therefore further facilitating vertical articulation (Eddy, 2017.)

**Assessment design with the Seal in mind**
        New York State has determined Intermediate High as the target performance level for a high school student in World Languages to earn the Seal of Biliteracy (New York State Education Department, 2016). Students can meet that criteria in a world

language through diverse evidence, including an established course, valid and reliable external language exams, or appropriate level performance assessment projects in community languages not offered at the school. It is essential that teachers understand and design for vertical articulation, keeping in mind the characteristics of performance targets with Can-Do statements (NCSSFL-ACTFL, 2014, 2017) for planning curriculum, assessment, and instruction. Teachers must plan with the Seal of Biliteracy in mind and continue design backward from that goal, for the performance targets preceding it. In the MAT program, the curriculum and assessment courses train candidates on the NCSSFL/ACTFL Can-Do Statements as general benchmarks and indicators for three target levels of performance: Novice High, Intermediate-Mid, and Intermediate High/Advanced-Low. Queens College candidates design tasks in the three modes of communication, Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational (Adair-Hauck, B., Glisan, E. W., Koda, K., Sandrock, S. P., & Swender, E., 2003). They begin design at the Intermediate High/Pre-Advanced target level and design backward from it, as opposed to developing assessments at the Novice level first. These transfer tasks (Eddy, 2006a/b, 2014, 2017; McTighe & Wiggins, 2001/2005; Perkins & Salomon,1988) effectively answer the Context, requiring the learner to solve problems and create products in novel situations with value beyond the classroom, considering needs beyond the self.  After designing the tasks, teachers derive specific Can-Do statements from them (Eddy, 2017) and use them as implementation tools. Teachers reveal these Can-Dos and the Context on the first day of the unit, so that learners can see the plan for tangible and pragmatic deliverables from the summative assessment back to the start of the unit and their role in learner accountability with each task at the onset of the unit.

In the APAT cohort exemplar for a Hindi program, an environmental interest group seeks information on keeping Diwali healthy and green (See Appendix B). Using culturally authentic materials representing different Diwali celebrations and the resulting pollution from firecrackers, learners identify, categorize, and summarize the information. They use this information to choose and come to consensus with a partner on Diwali traditions and

environmental concerns. These tasks culminate in presentational mode tasks that create new products and solve the problem posed in the Context. Novice High learners create an infographic, listing preferred traditions and healthy items to include for Diwali. Intermediate Mid target learners make a multimedia presentation on different regional responses to Diwali concerns, and for the Seal of Biliteracy target level task, Intermediate High learners research and present concerns in a letter on pollution control to the environmental interest group.

In the Korean exemplar for the theme of Contemporary Life and the topic of House and Home (See Appendix C), an urban development group seeks to change traditional housing with a turn toward modernity and contemporary lifestyles. Using authentic materials outlining the current problem, learners must give feedback on plans for housing developments. Novice learners contribute to the problem posed in the *Context* by comparing U.S. and Korean homes, listing key characteristics of each. Intermediate target performance tasks ask learners to create a web advertisement in order to sell a Korean home and attract buyers to that style. Intermediate High target learners will debate both sides of the issue and create a video with suggestions for the urban development group, appropriate for a Seal of Biliteracy task.

**Developing and mentoring the novice, critical language teacher**
After completing the 24 credits for initial certification including the year of student teaching, the teacher returns to complete 15 credits of graduate coursework. Due to the shortage of World Language teachers, many candidates find jobs as leave replacements or full- time teachers via internship certification during their last semester as an initial candidate. For the in-service teacher, the graduate coursework requires assessments designed for the professional with one to three years of experience and a classroom with which to pilot exemplars and share feedback with colleagues. In addition to advanced coursework including comparative, global education models and classroom management, MAT candidates take advanced curriculum and assessment design and two research courses in world language education. The advanced curriculum class requires

two key assessments: Before and After task and the three-level articulated curriculum unit plan. In the Before and After task, candidates revise a formative task after attending a professional conference session on performance assessment. They implement the new task, gather samples of student work, evaluate the assessment results, and receive feedback from peers. Teachers also design a three-level articulated curriculum unit plan according to the UC:ADAPT model (Eddy, 2006a, 2007, 2015, 2017), using the APAT cohort system as their summative performance assessment. They also implement the new NCSSFL-ACTFL Can Do Statements (NCSSFL-ACTFL, 2017), to include Intercultural Competence Can Dos aligned with the task in each of the three modes. This template is complete with formative assessments designed backward from the summative APAT targets, indicating the content learners will use as review from current year, spiral from previous year, or new as of this unit (Eddy, 2017). This key assessment exemplar provides the blueprint of vertical and horizontal articulation for the critical language teacher in charge of developing a new program. The two research courses explore questions in curriculum, assessment, and instruction with an opportunity to implement the research project in the classroom or with other world language colleagues. Both the curriculum and research courses culminate in a presentation suitable for a conference session.

Teachers in the MAT in Critical Languages Education learn to design Articulated Performance Assessment Tasks for a cohort system because it brings cohesiveness to the learning process between levels, buildings, and schools and tangible evidence of a thematic and unfolded articulated curriculum. These exemplars can be used not only at the secondary level but also in higher education in post-secondary world language departments for true K-16 articulation. These template exemplars are currently part of a statewide call for participation in the NYSED Standards and Professional Development Initiative. More examples in other languages can be found in the resources section of the New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT) website, NYSAFLT.org. Research on the exemplars and impact

studies are currently ongoing with subsequent results in preparation for publication.

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## Appendix A: World Languages NYS Syllabus Themes and Topic

### World Languages NYS Syllabus Themes and Topics

| Identity Social Relationships | Contemporary Life | Science, Technology and the Arts | Global Awareness |
|---|---|---|---|
| Auto/Biographical | Nutrition and Meal Taking | Physical Environs Climate | Environmental Issues |
| Family Life | House and Home | Technology | Food and Nutrition |
| Celebrations | Earning a Living Volunteerism | Pop Culture | Government and Politics |
| Social Events | Education | Design and Aesthetics | Health and Welfare |
| National Identities | Travel | Fine Arts: Music, Dance, Film, Literature, Theatre, Visual Arts | Global Challenges and Economy |
| Personal Goals | Leisure | Fashion and Clothing | Geography |
| Milestones | Community Public/Private Services | Inventions and Innovations | Social Justice, Human Rights, Accessibility |

(DRAFT World Languages NYS Syllabus Themes and Topics, Eddy, 2016)

## Appendix B: Articulated Performance Assessment task Template (1)

**Articulated Performance Assessment Task Template** (Eddy, J. 2006, 2014, 2015, 2017)   Sushma Malhotra

**Global Awareness Environmental Issues**

**EU:** Students will understand that environmental issues can inform how we practice cultural celebrations.

**EQ:** To what extent do environmental issues inform and change cultural practices and products? How is the individual responsible for their contribution to the health of their community?

**Context:** An environmental health organization seeks informational material for a Green Diwali to help people stay healthy during the celebration.

| | Novice high | Intermediate Mid | Intermediate High/Pre Advanced (Seal of Biliteracy) |
|---|---|---|---|
| I/N | Watch a Diwali celebration video featuring Diwali in different regions and circle items included in the Diwali celebrations. | Watch a video on various regions celebrating Diwali. Use the graphic organizer to enter different information about the Festival celebration. | Students will read texts and watch videos celebrating Diwali at various regions. Students will summarize the cause and effects of pollution in the environment. |
| | I can identify some basic facts on the items for Diwali. | I can categorize information on main idea points and key information about Diwali. | I can organize information from texts and videos to determine cause and effect of pollution during Diwali. |
| I/P | Share with a partner and ask how you prepare and celebrate Diwali. Decide which items are environmentally friendly or not. | Students have Diwali celebrations pictures with readings from different regions. They ask questions to compare and contrast which regions celebrate pollution free Diwali. | Students will share their experiences of Diwali celebration in various regions and decide which region they would like to go to celebrate Diwali and why. |
| | I can ask and answer simple questions and choose healthy components of the Diwali celebration. | I can exchange information in conversations, asking a variety of follow-up questions about Diwali. I can compare and contrast regional response to environmental concerns with peers. | I can come to consensus on preferred regions to celebrate Diwali and give reasons for my choice. |
| P/R | Students design an infographic listing healthy and unhealthy components of Diwali celebration, their preferences, and present it in a gallery walk for the organization. | Students create PowerPoint presentation, Voicethread or video with details of celebration and its impact on the environment. | Using reports on the impact of Diwali celebration on the environment and solutions to control pollution, students will write a letter to the health department on how to control pollution during the festival celebration. |
| | I can create an infographic express my likes and dislikes and state healthy items for the Diwali celebration. | I can make a presentation on environmental concerns across regions on the Diwali celebration. | I can research and present suggestions and advice on pollution control during Diwali. |

## Appendix B: Articulated Performance Assessment task Template (2)

**Articulated Performance Assessment Task Template** (Eddy, J. 2006, 2014, 2015, 2017) Choi Kim Soojin

**Contemporary Life / House and Home**

**EU:** Students will understand that culture influences the way houses are structured.
Students will understand that there is relationship between housing characteristics and life style factors.

**EQ:** To what extent does the country and culture influence what type of house we live in?
Why does the structure of the house change with time and culture?

**Context:** An urban redevelopment group seeks information and feedback on plans for neighborhood housing.

**Vertically Articulated Assessment across three levels**

| | Novice mid-high | Intermediate Low-Mid | Intermediate High/Pre-Advanced (Seal of Biliteracy) |
|---|---|---|---|
| IN | Students visit authentic real estate website from Korean internet website, write questions on the ads and select 3 interesting houses/rooms according to their needs. I can choose proper houses from the real estate website. | Students will watch a folk tale video clip of an old Korean house and answer two questions: What cause the tiger to misunderstand the conversation between the mom and the baby? How it is different than a typical house in your country? I can provide information and details on the traditional Korean house. | In groups, students will read different articles about controversy over reconstruction of Korean traditional houses and urban redevelopment. I can analyze the current issue about controversy over reconstruction of Korean traditional houses and urban redevelopment. |
| IP | Assuming the role of customer and realtor, students describe the features they are looking for in a home, ask questions, and choose the best one. I can negotiate and select my desired house in the conversation with realtors. | Compare and contrast the features of your house with your partner's and which spaces you and your family spend most of time when they are home. Make bar graph based on your partner's response. I can compare the typical house in my country with traditional Korean housing. | Students will debate in virtual public hearings on the reconstruction of Korean traditional houses. I can evaluate advantages and disadvantages from given information. I can explain my argument with reasons for my position. |
| PR | Students create Venn diagrams for U.S and Korean houses and present the distinctive characteristics of a house in Korea. I can compare aspects of Korean houses and U.S houses. I can determine the most significant features about Korean houses. | Plan to sell your Korean house and create a web advertisement to include all features with neighborhood/community information to attract potential buyers. I can produce a description of my house on a real-estate website in TL. | Students make a video to report the virtual public hearings and present both opinions. Conclude the video with suggestions. I can synthesize information and make recommendations for a multimedia report. |