Language Demands within edTPA Defined

Within the edTPA, there are four academic language demands to consider:

1. **Language Functions**: The language function is basically the PURPOSE or reason for using language in a learning task. What will learners do with language to understand content? Often, the standards and/or objectives include language functions embedded in the content to be learned (i.e., explain, infer, compare, analyze, justify).

2. **Vocabulary**: 1. Words and phrases with subject specific meanings that differ from meanings used in everyday life: 2. General academic vocabulary used across disciplines; and 3. Subject-specific words defined for use in the discipline

3. **Syntax**: The set of conventions for organizing symbols, words, and phrases together into structures (e.g., sentences, formulas, staffs in music). For example, syntax refers to the structure of a sentence—its length, word order, grammar, arrangement of phrases, active or passive voice, etc. If the syntax of a sentence is challenging its reader, then it is clouding the sentence's meaning. Here candidates might determine which symbolic conventions, grammatical structures or sentence patterns might be unfamiliar or difficult for their students.

   Please note, that for several content areas, such as World Language and Classical Languages, the academic language rubrics do not exist due to these elements being central concepts within these content areas.

4. **Discourse**: This demand refers to how people who are members of a discipline talk and write. It is how they create and share knowledge. Each discipline or subject area has particular ways of communicating what they know and how they know it. 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. For example, scientists and historians both write texts to justify a position based on evidence or data. In both fields, they perform the same language function—justify—but the way they organize that text and present supporting evidence follows a different structure or discourse pattern. Teacher candidates could identify what discourse structures they expect their students to understand or produce in the learning segment.

Within edTPA, Candidates Address Language Use in Task 1 and 3:

A. **Language Demands Task 1** – Planning for Instruction and Assessment (Rubric 4)

   Within Task 1, candidates are asked to:

   1. Choose a language function central to learning segment
   2. Identify two additional language demands related to function and activity:
      a. Vocabulary/symbols
      b. Either Syntax or Discourse
   3. Choose a learning activity within the segment where the function is used
4. Identify the instructional supports they have planned that develop language use for their learners

B. **Language Demands Task 3 – Assessment (Rubric 14)**

Within Task 3, candidates are asked to analyze student language use by:

1. Explaining students' academic language use – identified function, vocabulary, and additional demand/s
2. Providing evidence of students’ language use using video clips and/or work samples - identified function, vocabulary, and additional demand/

Evidence from video clip(s) should be specific. We are encouraging candidates to provide evidence that goes beyond parroting back definitions of unfamiliar words to reveal understandings of vocabulary and demonstrate the language function identified. Likewise, evidence from work samples should show how learners are demonstrating their ability to perform the language function (e.g., explain, infer), produce the discourse, and/or display their understanding of key vocabulary.