The Case for Technology Supported Service Learning: How Chronicled Videos Enriched Pre-Service Bilingual Teachers' Understanding of Community

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ABSTRACT: *Pre-service bilingual teachers completed a service-learning project as part of their teacher preparation program, and chronicled it in video, which was viewable in YouTube through Private Sharing. Students then reflected on the project and how different technologies supported their learning. The purpose of this mixed methods case study was to determine to what extent technology supported their learning and reflection as they completed their service learning projects. In what way did the chronicled videos enrich the experience and help them better understand the communities where they will be teaching? Data were triangulated through three open-ended reflections and video analysis rubrics. The findings for these data were categorized into four relevant areas: 1) technology that supported learning; 2) service learning project quality showcased on videos; 3) video quality; and 4) reflective thematic assertions.*
Keywords: *Bilingual Teachers, Case Study, Pre-Service, Service Learning,*

I. INTRODUCTION

Service learning is an integral part of bilingual teacher preparation, simply because teachers are entering a community where they are the leaders and role models. They serve their communities through the children in their classrooms, and their involvement with the parents. Cairn &Kielsmeier define service learning as "the integration of community service activities with academic skills, content, and instruction reflection on the service experience" (as cited in Karayan and Gathercoal, 2005, p. 79 [1]). This is an idea that is particularly appealing in teacher preparation because, ultimately, teaching is about service in the community, how learning is accomplished in the environment of practice. This is not to be confused with field experiences in schools, but rather the act of taking the community and making it a part of the classroom, where one cannot be separate from the other.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Service learning has been examined from different angles, and its value has been both explored and questioned. However, those who encourage service learning as a vital part of training teachers also insist on some key benefits if done right. Eyler, Giles, Stenson, and Gray state, "…scholars have found that service-learning experiences often positively impact participants' understanding of the complexities of the field and their abilities to problem-solve and think critically while resulting in instructors' satisfaction with the quality of learning that transpired" (as cited in Lawrence and Butler, 2010, p. 158 [2]).

Another important component of successful and effective service learning projects is student ownership. Student led initiatives to identify a community need or problem and help solve it are the ideal strategies to help students take ownership and involve deeper-level thinking (Gonsalves, 2011 [3]). To meet the needs of the community, students should apply knowledge gained from the classroom as they assist others in the service learning project (Robinson, 2009 [4]). Service learning experiences should be positive, meaningful, and real to the participants, as well as be cooperative in nature. Furthermore, service learning should address complex problems and offer opportunities to engage in problem solving by requiring participants to gain knowledge of the service learning activity. It should not be an episodic volunteer program or logging a set number of community service hours in order to graduate (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2008 [5]).

Additionally, they found that there are several important stages or phases of action to the successful integration of classroom and community. In phase one, the educator plans activities that aid the students in examining their inner biases toward the community they plan to collaborate with. The author suggests this will help students address fears, prejudices, stereotypes, and expectations. In phase two, the source of thoughts and feelings are examined to create discussion as to the impact of personal feelings and influences. In phase three, students then investigate what is fact, opinion, or speculation. In phase four, students investigate through activity within the community being studied.

In addition, the National Youth Leadership Council, (2008) has established standards and indicators that,when met,service learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specific outcomes. Theseinclude, as listed verbatim,

1. *Indicators:*Service- learning experiences include the processes of investigating community needs, preparing for service, action, reflection, demonstration of learning and impacts, and celebration.
2. Service-learning is conducted during concentrated blocks of time across a period of several weeks or months.
3. Service-learning experiences provide enough time to address identified community needs and achieve learning outcomes. The indicators for duration and intensity basically emphasize that service learning should endure for long enough to give students meaningful experiences during each of the phases. The literature to date shows that service-learning that endures over an entire semester has stronger effects than activities of shorter duration (Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005; Kraft & Krug, 1994 as cited in Billig, 2011 P. 9 [7]).

The traditional understanding of service learning is often thought of as community service in which one goes out into the community and volunteers time or donates to a cause. Service learning, however, includes these characteristics in addition to becoming a naturally organized extension of the school curriculum and includes a reflective component. (Karayan andGathercoal, 2005 [1]).

In order for service learning to truly be meaningful, though, those engaged in it must have proper opportunities to reflect and look back at the event with clear, hindsight perspective, so that they can fully see themselves as part of the communities they will serve. Studies have shown that when students are asked to identify the kinds of learning they are using to solve problems, they achieve more when they assess their own contributions and work (Billig, 2011 [7]). Reflection is as an integral part of service learning and should be woven throughout the service learning experience (Billig, 2011 [7]). In addition to the actual service project and videotape creation, students were also encouraged to reflect on their experience while conducting the service, the video and editing process, as well as the product outcome.

Harre (2007 [8]) found that "when young people are active in their communities, they not only help create a thriving society but also help create themselves" (p.711). This process is supported by studies such as Iverson & James (2010 [9]) who examined how pre-service teachers who participated in a service-learning project found their understandings changing. They found that their participants moved from an abstract view of citizenship into a more concrete one where they saw how they have the power to make a difference, that they can do what is right, as well as the notion that caring is an active process. Moving beyond basic service and reflection in service learning is important in order to create a true service learning experience. Students can develop their own beliefs and opinions, sometimes changing what they had previously thought (Ohn, 2009 [10]). Other characteristics of service learning should encompass critical thinking for real world situations, benefits for community and students as well as immediate results (Innella, 2010 [11]).

Reflection is thinking not only about the experience but also questioning parts of the experience. As part of the reflective process, the participants may think about what they know from the experience, what they may do differently next time, and finally, wonder about new questions they may have and how the experience changed their perspective on the topic (Pappas, 2010 [12]).While it is said that quality is more important than quantity,Eyler& Giles (1997 [2]) and Root &Billig (2008 [13]) have stated that several studies have confirmed this age-old adage, which is that not the quantity, but the quality of the reflection that matters.

III. THE STUDY

3.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential that videos may offer in a service-learning project. The research question that guided this research was as follows:

In what way did the chronicled videos enrich the service learning experience and help pre-service teachers better understand the communities where they will be teaching?

3.2Methodology

In this mixed methods case study, participants completed a service-learning project, then chronicled a culminating event through the use of video and uploaded this to YouTube. This service-learning project was intended to meet the needs of bilingual communities as they are supported by the future teachers that were observed. This case study examined the bilingual pre-service teacher, a picture that was created through mixed data collected both qualitatively and quantitatively. The project was bounded by both the period of time in which it was completed, as well as by the general community settings of the projects, all of which were completed by pre-service bilingual teachers.

According to Creswell (1998 [14]), the concept of the bounded system in a case study is the act by which the researcher determines that the "case" that is being studied contains boundaries of time and place, and

therefore, a system. In order to fully explore a bounded system, such as the service-learning project of this study, multiple data sources must be utilized, which will be more fully discussed in the data collection descriptions later in this paper. The case study form of inquiry that organized this study was ideal for mixed methods because of the multiple sources of data that are necessary to fully create a description of a "case". The data collection strategy employed here was the concurrent embedded mixed methods strategy, "which has a primary method that guides the project and a secondary database that provides a supporting role in the procedures" (Creswell, 2009, p. 214 [15]).

3.3 Participants
The participants of this study were all enrolled in an evening elementary teacher preparation program. Most of them were paraprofessionals who work full time in the schools. In total, 45 pre-service teachers participated in the service-learningproject, enrolled in two sections of the same social studies and language arts methods course. The delivery method for these two sections was different, as is described here:
• 22 pre-service teachers were enrolled in an online course with *Second Life* augmentation
• 23 pre-service teachers were enrolled in a web-augmented course (reduced seat) that was 50% face to face and 50% online

The 45 participants were close to completing their preparation program, within 1 to 2 semesters from graduation. They were also a unique population in that most of them are Hispanic, bilingual, older, returning students, and raising families. Essentially, this group of individuals was constantly plagued by time constraints, particularly as they were juggling full time jobs, a family, and a full course load. In spite of all this, they were overcoming tremendous personal challenges to attend school and complete a degree.

IV. INSTRUMENTS AND DATA COLLECTION
4.1 Data Collection
Both groups of students were given the same assignment to plan, implement, and video tape a service-learning project, and then reflect on their work. The service-learning project was completed collaboratively, in groups of 3 or 4 students, so that a total of 11 projects were submitted.
Data collection was completed with two instruments, which were completed online by all students:
• Online Service Learning Reflection Survey, and
• Service Learning Video Rubric.
The first instrument was created by the researchers to match the components and conditions of the project as it was assigned in class. The survey was a concurrent sampling of both closed and open-ended questions, and which was the primary source of description for the bounded system in this case study. The second instrument was adapted from the Coverdell World Wide Schools (1998) Service Learning Rubric (also found online athttp://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/servicelearning/pdf/rubric2010.pdf [16]). The Rubric was intended to capture qualitative data. As a result, both instruments were deployed to the participants concurrently because of the differences in data types represented in each instrument. The types of data each collected are elaborated below.

V. ONLINE SERVICE LEARNING REFLECTION SURVEY
The Online Service Learning Reflection Survey (see Appendix A) was intended to help students reflect on the process they had undergone during the completion of the service-learning project. For the purpose of this study, only two of the answered items in the survey were analyzed, as listed below:
• What impact did this have on the targeted audience for your project? (open ended)
• How did the creation of the video help you reflect on the overall development of this project? (open ended)
Data were collected primarily through asynchronous online means, which were collected concurrently. The open-ended survey was posted online for completion after the service learning projects were completed.

VI. SERVICE LEARNING VIDEO RUBRIC COMPONENTS (4 SCALE RATING)
The Service Learning Video Rubric (see Appendix B) utilized for the purpose of evaluating the videos contained eight general indicators that encompassed two general areas. These two areas involved the evidence of the service-learning project itself, and the quality of the video. Below are the eight indicators, as listed in the rubric:
• Introduction,
• Coordinated with Community,
• Integrated academically,
• Uses academics in real world,
• Develops caring,
• Improves quality of life,

- Video continuity and editing, and
- Content organization.

All YouTube videos of the projects were also linked in their Blackboard course, which in turn facilitated their completing of analysis rubrics, also posted and submitted online. The data collected from the rubrics was collected quantitatively and utilized by both the researchers and the participants. The participants utilized it for self-analysis, while the researchers utilized them for the purpose of evaluating the project.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis process utilized in this study was a concurrent embedded one, typically where one data set supports another (Creswell, 2009 [16]). In this case, the Service Learning Video Rubric provided a quantitative measure of how pre-service teachers represented their experiences engaged in the community. Embedded in the performance indicators of the rubric are supporting qualitative data presented from two of the open-ended questions in the Online Service Learning Reflection Survey. Thus, data were validated through triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative data sources.

VIII. FINDINGS

Data were analyzed and findings were documented across these general areas:
1. Service Learning Project Indicators on Videos
2. Convergence of Themes
3. Assertions

Service Learning Project Indicators on Videos

In order to attempt to determine an answer to the research question, we needed to examine to what extent common service learning indicators were present in the videos. Thus, the Service Learning Video Rubric elements that are analyzed here are as follows:
- Coordinated with Community,
- Integrated academically,
- Uses academics in real world,
- Develops caring, and
- Improves quality of life.

Figures 1 and 2display findings from the videos, which demonstrated the quality of the service learning project, as rated on a 4 point scale. Figure 1 demonstrates results from participants in the online class, and Figure 2 outlines results from the web augmented section. The different colored columns indicate the rating for each of the projects under the five indicators of effective service learning. Therefore, Figure 1 shows five projects rated (i.e. 2-SL-1, 2-SL-2, etc.), and Figure 2 shows the ratings of six projects (i.e. 48-R-1, 48-R-2, etc.).
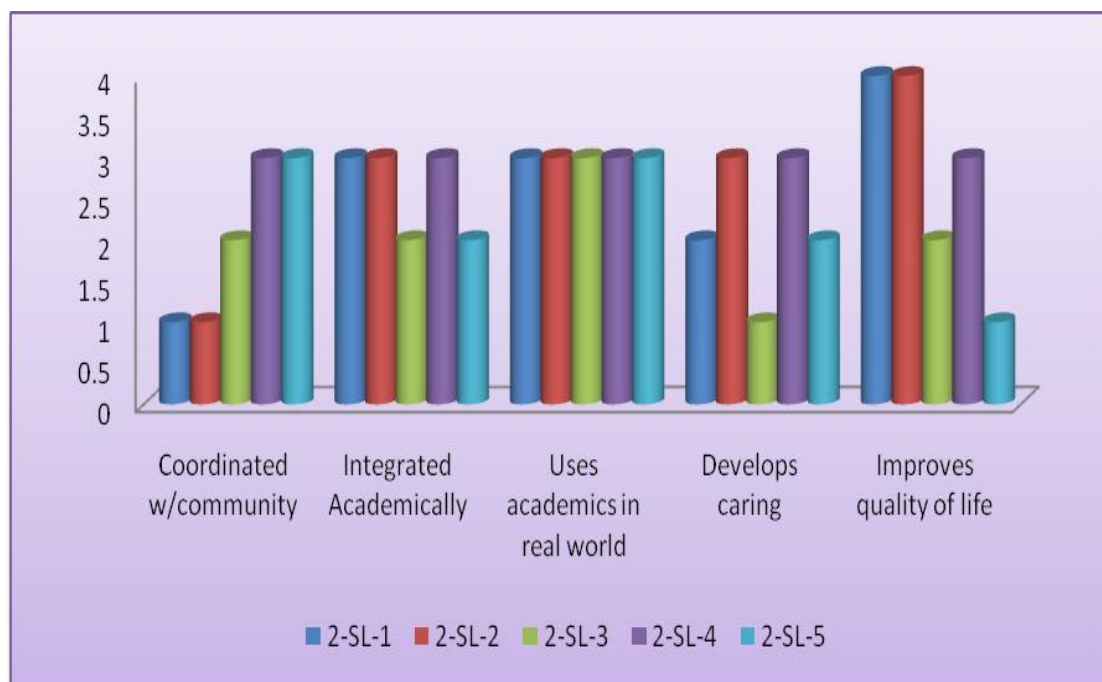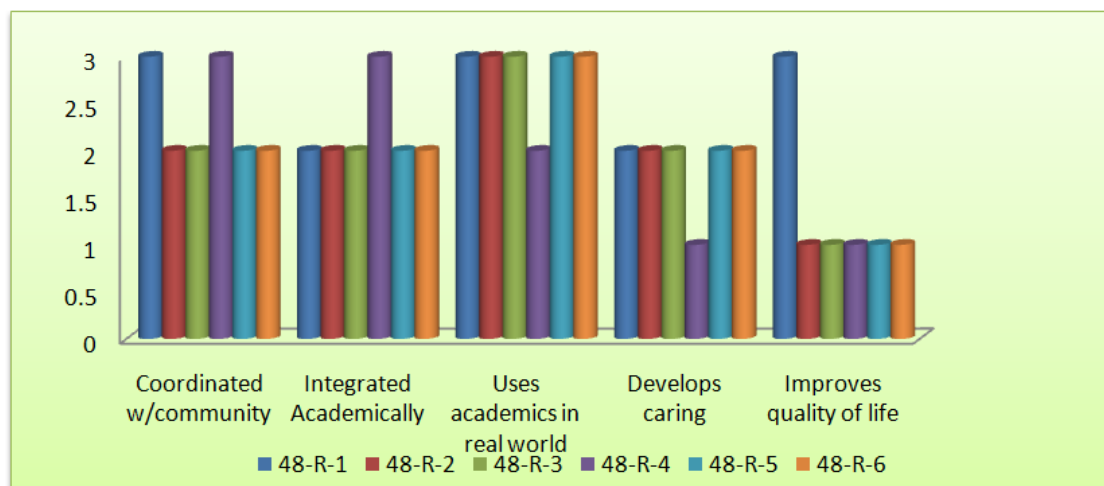

Figure 1

Figure 2

While the figures do not show any consistency across the five indicators for any of the groups, some areas rated above 3 do bear spotlighting. The one area where 10 of the 11 groups scored a 3 or higher, was in the uses of academics in the real world. This is an application they learned in their coursework, in the manner that it was introduced by the instructor. Students were made aware that what they learn in class can be converted to real world action, and the majority of their videos seemed to indicate this.

The indicator that seemed to have the lowest ratings for the groups—all but two groups—was the one on developing caring. This is a curiosity that is disproved in the themes that emerge through open-ended reflection, and which will be discussed later. The videos did not seem to capture the affect that was clearly demonstrated upon reflection.

Four groups—though not necessarily the same ones—demonstrated ratings of 3 or higher for coordinating with the community, integrating academically, and improve the quality of life.

IX.   CONVERGENCE OF THEMES

Data from open-ended reflections were analyzed for recurring themes, thenexamined for patterns to identify a convergence of data. Two sets of themes emerged, based on the open-ended reflections of students responding to two questions:
- What impact did this have on the targeted audience for your project? (#6 in the Service Learning Reflection Survey)
- How did the creation of the video help you reflect on the overall development of this project? (#10 in the Service Learning Reflection Survey)

Table1 summarizes the convergence of themes that were found.

Impact Made (#6)	Overall Project Development (#10)
1. Brought awareness and interest	1. Awareness of community issues and needs
2. Received appreciation	2. Self-satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment
3. Provided goods or gave help	3. Community impact and response
4. Brought change or incited action	4. Team effort
5. Motivated or caused positive affect	5. Learning process

Table 1

X.   FIRST ASSERTION: AWARENESS OF COMMUNITY ISSUES AND NEEDS

Through the participation in this project, pre-service teachers became more aware of the needs that assail the community, and even clarified previous naiveté on what it means to face a need and attempt to address it. Some reflections that participants recorded in the survey included the following:
- *"It helped me better understand and open my eyes to reality."*
- *"The creating of the video helped me reflect on the overall development of this project by the use of communicating with the individuals in person showing more respect towards community needs."*
- *"By reviewing the video and looking back it made me reflect that there are so many things in the community that one can do to help out and make it a better (sic) community for families and children."*
- *"It made me aware of seeing the larger picture and asking myself why do we have to wait to get assigned this to have to do something like that. I think as future teachers we should do these often. Not only why at the university but when we become teachers. Teachers should do these types of projects from the kindness*

of their heart. It really shows that you are in the profession because you want to better the lives of children everywhere. I became aware through the creation of the video that everyone we spoke to cared and it probably will benefit a lot of people."

Data found that self-awareness and satisfaction was largely credited to the act of videotaping, editing, and then viewing the final product. Watching the appreciation from those they served and seeing themselves in that moment helped many of them see that they were integral elements in their community. They saw how service learning should be an essential part of being a teacher.

XI. SECOND ASSERTION: SELF SATISFACTION AND A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

No service-learning project is complete if those that planned it do not feel some sense of accomplishment. In this case, responses indicated self-satisfaction in their participation in this project, a sense that it was worthwhile to complete, regardless of any difficulties they encountered along the way.

* *"The creation of this video and some of the other videos made me reflect and brings a warm smile to my heart just to see the people or businesses that we helped."*
* *"The pictures in the video help me reflect the long hours and hard work it was to organize such event in my campus and how rewarding it was. It also showed my students wanting to help and make a difference to a less fortunate family. In this project I learned I can make a difference and most important I can be a leader not just a follower in organizing an event."*
* *"The creation of the video let us see what we did. Through the process of creating the video, I felt very proud of ourselves for being able to conduct this service. It made me want to be more actively involved in helping others. Also, I realize how these types of services require a lot of planning but that can be done."*

Just like anything else, hindsight also helped them see how they could have improved not just the quality of the video they produced, but also the quality of the service learning they completed. They watched their videos and others, seeing how editing could have been better, how the filming could have captured the moment better if they had handled filming and planning differently. By the same token, limitations with time contributed to their realization that they could have provided much better service, perhaps on a larger scope, had they but thought it through better.

XII. THIRD ASSERTION: COMMUNITY IMPACT AND RESPONSE

Some responses in the open-ended reflections indicated that the participants noticed a general reaction from the community that they attempted to serve.

* *"The creation of the video really lets you see in detail of the way you were involved with your event, the way you presented yourself to the children and parents….It also makes you realize the impact you have brought upon the community making you want to even do more for them."*
* *"Although we struggled greatly to put it together, in the creation, we realized the gratitude and smiles this community had. The parents demonstrated they liked the involvement, but they needed a reason to get involved in the school setting."*
* *"After seeing the pictures and the clips during our project I personally realized that even though the dogs don't talk we were able to see how they enjoyed been (sic) taken out for a walk."*

Because students worked in groups, they had to collaborate in the project. It was their responsibility as a group to determine how to approach the service learning. For some, the group experience bonded them. For others, the group was a supporting organism for helping them coordinate the different tasks it took to plan and implement the project. Having more people to split these tasks was invaluable, and some also found that with the group manpower, they could have organized their efforts better and created a much better project. The above assertions create a holistic picture of the bilingual pre-service teacher involved in service learning and demonstrates that not only do they realize the good they are doing, but they also learn that it is a conceptual necessity for becoming a good teacher.

XIII. FOURTH ASSERTION: TEAM EFFORT

While the students in this teacher preparation program are used to working in groups, this project seemed to bring forth to them just how much more important it was to work as a team when what was riding on the line was something outside themselves.

* *"It has helped me to have a better understanding about working together in groups and discussing about different opinions and agreeing in just one."*
* *"Having the opportunity to refer back to the video and watching my group work together as a team, is truly amazing. Involving myself in this community service made me a better person. The most wonderful part about being a volunteer is that you always get back more than you give."*
* *"The video neglected to encompass everything that we did to prepare for this video. It did not show how*

Eve [names changed] had to be calling the shelter to make arrangements for the orientation and to accommodate the large group at a single time, it didn't show how I went to several stores to ask for donations of dog or cat food for the shelter, only to be turned down by all of them because I couldn't provide them with a letter, or how Julian and Julia worked on the editing of the video for a long time. Overall the video made it seem that this project was easy and effortless when in reality it took time and energy to develop the project."

•   *"It promoted a good camaraderie with my fellow group members and brought us closer together."*

XIV. FIFTH ASSERTION: LEARNING PROCESS

While this theme emerged in only a few responses, it was noteworthy to mention because it indicated that there was at least some sense of the process of learning, and that large projects with as many components as this one did require reflection. Even mistakes and missteps bring growth, and these should not be discounted because—at least in this instance—they indicated a willingness to try it again.

•   *"I think we could (sic) of edited the video a little better, and asked for help on how to make our video with a little more quality. Maybe if the requirements of the video ran a little longer we could have showed all of our service learning project video taken and share with others all the fun and excitement I think we all felt."*

•   *"By seeing the video, we saw what errors we made and it will give us more feedback to do it better next time."*

•   *"It help me reflect on the things we should of (sic) not done and the things that we could also have done to better help the teens."*

XV. CONCLUSIONS

Technology aids in data collection in that it allows for immediate review and reflection for pre-service teachers, an immediacy that takes advantage of the impetus of feeling and reinforces the meaningfulness of the experience. With the creation of a video diary of the event, service givers were given a view of what they did and the impact of the project on their lives and those of others.

The collection of real time real life data and footage served as a powerful testimonial of what had been accomplished.The chronicled videos supported the notion that, even in online teaching, meaningful interaction, learning, and community awareness can occur.

The integration of multiple technology resources in the process of completing the service learning, from inception to implementation, provided the pre-service teachers with the means to accomplish a show case of service learning projects. The assertions found in this case study could not have been reached had not technology supported the project through different means. The most important aspect of this was being able to chronicle the experience through video, editing it into a showcase video, and then returning to view theirs and others as well.

Service learning should have reflection in it in order for those who are providing the service—either by meeting a need, providing a service, bringing awareness, or helping others—can truly see its value and learn from the experience. For bilingual pre-service teachers, this experience also has the potential for situating them more effectively into the communities they will serve as teachers, and to learn the context of the children's experiences. Culturally, this has a potential for deeper understanding of children. Linguistically, it helps teachers think about how their instruction can serve the literacy needs of the children and parents who are raising them. Socially, they become a more integral part of their community and create partnerships and bonds that can further enhance their teaching.

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	4	3	2	1
Introduction	The introduction is compelling and provides motivating content that hooks the viewer from the beginning of the video and keeps the audience's attention.	The introduction is clear and coherent and evokes interest in the topic.	The introduction does not create a strong sense of what is to follow.	The introduction does not orient the audience to what will follow.
Coordinated w/community	Active, direct collaboration with community by the teacher and/or student is evident in video	Community members act as consultants in the project development as evidenced in video	Community members appear to have been informed of the project directly, based on what is on video	Community members appear to have been coincidentally informed or not knowledgeable at all
Integrated academically	Service-learning was used as instructional strategy in teacher preparation with content/service components integrated	Service-learning was used as a teaching technique for content/service components concurrent	Service-learning was part of curriculum but had sketchy connections, with emphasis on service	Service-learning is supplemental to bilingual special Education teacher preparation curriculum, it was just a service project or good deed
Uses academics in real world	All students have direct application of new skill or knowledge in community service	All students have some active application of new skill or knowledge	Some students more involved than others or little community service involvement	Skill knowledge used mostly in the classroom; no active community service experience
Develops caring	Explanations or presentations indicate affective growth regarding self in community and the importance of service	Explanations or presentations show generic growth regarding the importance of community service	Explanations or presentations restricted to pros and cons of particular service project regarding the community	Explanations or presentations limited to self-centered pros and cons of the service project
Improves quality of life	Facilitate change or insight; help alleviate a suffering; solve a problem; meet a need or address an issue	Changes enhance an already good community situation	Changes mainly decorative, but new and unique benefits realized in community	Changes mainly decorative, but limited community benefit, or are not new and unique
Video Continuity and Editing	The tape is edited with only high quality shots remaining. Video moves smoothly from shot to shot. A variety of transitions are used to assist in communicating the main idea and smooth the flow from one scene to the next. Shots and scenes flow seamlessly. Digital effects are used appropriately for emphasis.	The tape is edited throughout with only quality shots remaining. A variety of transitions are used. Good pacing and timing.	The tape is edited in few spots. Several poor shots remain. Transitions from shot to shot are choppy, and the types of wipes and fades selected are not always appropriate for the scene. There are many unnatural breaks and/or early cuts.	The tape is unedited and many poor shots remain. No transitions between clips are used. Raw clips run back to back in the final video.
Content/Organization	The content includes a clear statement of purpose or theme and is creative, compelling and clearly written. A rich variety of supporting information in the video contributes to understanding the project's main purpose. Events and messages are presented in a logical order.	Information is presented as a connected theme with accurate, current supporting information that contributes to understanding the project's main purpose.	The content does not present a clearly stated purpose, is vague, and some of the supporting information does not seem to fit the main purpose or appears as a disconnected series of scenes with no unifying main idea.	The content lacks a central purpose, clear point of view and logical sequence of information. Much of the supporting information in the video is irrelevant to the overall message. The viewer is unsure what the message is because there is little persuasive information and only one or two facts about the topic. Information is incomplete, out of date and/or incorrect.