Understanding Academic Language

Competency

Educator knows, uses, and shares strategies that enable students to use and understand academic language within the context of the classroom.

Key Method

The educator demonstrates knowledge of strategies for each of the following areas of academic language: content vocabulary, transition/signal words and phrases, and language functions. The educator understands bilingualism is the goal, not a replacement of native language.

Method Components

Content Vocabulary
1. Implement several different strategies to teach content-specific vocabulary.
2. Use a rubric to determine the viability of each strategy.

Language Functions
1. Use language objectives to teach language functions specific to your content area.
2. Implement several varieties of language objectives and determine which best fits your teaching style.

Transition/signal words and phrases
1. Analyze your content text for transition/signal words and phrases.
2. Use strategies to help students understand the meaning of transition/signal words and phrases from the text.

Strategies
Educators use specific strategies and direct instruction to help students learn to understand

English Language Learners
Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

and use academic language, often using native language as foundation for learning the new language (ex. Allows students to preview material in home language using videos, translating technology, etc.)

Supporting Rationale and Research

August, Diane. "College and Career Ready English Language Learners: Challenges, Strengths, and Strategies." Paper presented at National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Conference, Lake Buena Vista, FL. Colorado Ed Initiative, 2013. http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/nabe-2013_diane-august.pdf.

August, Diane, and Timothy Shanahan, (Eds.). "Developing Literacy in Second-Language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth." Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. Sagepub, 2006. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ptVKY52epivPqMxGggHJMMmv69edU0hW/view?usp=sharing

August, Diane, et al. "Scaffolding Instruction for English Language Learners: A Resource Guide for ELA." Engageny, 2014. https://www.engageny.org/resource/scaffolding-instruction-english-language-learners-resource-guides-english-language-arts-and

"Framework for English Language Proficiency Development Standards Corresponding to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards."Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO] Council of Chief State School Officers, 2012, https://www.ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/ELPD%20Framework%20Booklet-Final%20for%20web.pdf

Genesee, Fred. The Home Language: An English Language Learner's Most Valuable Resource. The Home Language: An English Language Learner's Most Valuable Resource | Colorín Colorado (colorincolorado.org)

Lafond, Susan. "Common Core and ELLs: Key Shifts in Language Arts and Literacy." (Part II) {blog post}.Colorin Colorado, 2012, http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/51433/.

Mieure, Danell. "Comparing Core Reading Programs and the Communicative Approach to Build Vocabulary Skills of English Learners." Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers 37 (2015): 43-58 https://cdn.ymaws.com/aleronline.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/Yearbooks/ALER_Yearbook_37.pdf

Stanford University. "Key Principles for ELL Instruction." Stanford University, Stanford Graduate School of Education, January 2013, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ptVKY52epivPqMxGggHJMMmv69edU0hW/view?usp=sharing

Resources

[Vocabulary-building strategies to use when working with ELL student](#)

[Top 5 vocabulary strategies for English Language Learners](#)

[Teaching vocabulary in grades 4-12](#)

[Sample strategy rubric (SIOP)](#)

[Vocabulary games](#)

[Frayer Model](#)

[Eight strategies for teaching academic language](#)

[Building ELLs' academic language](#)

[Writing-language objectives](#)

[Academic Language Functions](#)

[What are language objectives?](#)

[Language functions](#)

[Language objectives](#)

[Linguistic scaffolds for writing-language objective](#)

Academic language information

Transition/signal words and phrases

Use of transition and situation words and phrases

English Language Learners
Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

Submission Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and receive a proficient score for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

400 - 500 words

Where have you seen the connection between the stages of Second Language Acquisition and the implementation of academic language in your classroom? If you have not seen connections, please explain where you would like to make those connections more explicit in your classroom.

Passing: Answer references the six stages of language acquisition as it applies to the situation being discussed and includes specific examples from the educator's own teaching experiences. Examples provided include students at different levels of language acquisition.

Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following artifacts:

Artifact 1: Lesson Plan
A lesson plan that includes direct instruction, using strategies from the Method Components section and the Resources section above, for the following three areas of academic language. You may want to relate this to a unit of study that you will be or currently are teaching.
- Vocabulary
- Language functions
- Transition/signal words and phrases
- Lesson plan also incorporates home language as a base for acquiring new language.

Artifact 2: Student Work Samples
Three student work samples (from the above lesson). Include work from students who are working at different SLA levels. Annotate each sample with the following information identified and marked:
- Identify the SLA of the student.
- Identify and comment on how the student is currently using academic language.
- Identify a next step for using academic language for this student.

Artifact 3: Presentation
A presentation that could be presented at a faculty meeting or a district training. This must include the following:
- An explanation of each of the specific Academic Language components (content vocabulary, language functions, transition/signal words and phrases)
- A strategy that you used in your classroom for each component
- A list of strategies for your professional development participants
- A feedback form for participants to submit to you

Part 2. Rubric

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Lesson Plan	Includes direct instruction for all three components -Vocabulary -Language functions -Transition/signal words and phrases Uses strategies listed in the Method Components and Resources sections of this micro-credential. Incorporates home language as a base for acquiring new language.	Direct instruction is only provided by some but not all three of the components. It is unclear which strategies were used by the educator Does not incorporate home language as a base for acquiring new language.	Direct instruction for the three components are not provided. It is unclear which strategies were used by the educator. Does not incorporate home language as a base for acquiring new language.
Artifact 2: Student Work Samples	Three student work samples are provided. Works samples show evidence of student understanding and using academic language to complete the task. Sample is annotated with the SLA level, comment on current understanding, and a next step in learning and using academic language.	Student work samples do not show a clear understanding and use by the students of academic language to complete the task. Annotations are limited and next steps are unclear.	There is little to no evidence of student understanding or use of academic language. There is no annotation provided and next steps are not included.
Artifact 3: Presentation	Explicitly explains the three components of academic language. Explicit explanation of how each component strategy was used in the classroom.	Provides a cursory explanation of each component of academic language. Includes general explanation of how each	Only explains one or two of the three components. Provides little explanation of how each

English Language Learners
Last Revised on Mar 18, 2022

Includes clear roles of the educator and students during the implementation steps.

Provides all artifacts used for each strategy done in the classroom, including handouts, writing on chart paper, whiteboard etc. These can be attached as documents, photos, etc.

Provides a list of academic language strategies for each of the three components, minimum of five in each area.

Feedback form has at least four questions relevant to the content of the PD. | strategy was used in the classroom.

Includes incomplete steps of implementation.

Provides most of the artifacts used in the classroom.

Provides a list of academic language strategies for each of the three components, fewer than five.

Feedback form has fewer than four questions relevant to the content of the PD. | component strategy was used in the lesson.

Provides vague or does not provide explanation of steps of implementation.

Provides few artifacts or none.

Provides a list of academic language strategies for one or two of the components. |

Part 3. Reflection

400 - 500 words

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?

Reflect on how using direct instruction to teach academic language supported your students in understanding the content being taught. Share specific examples from your classroom.

Passing: Reflection shows a growth in understanding and uses two or three specific examples from the classroom.