



Accelerating Language Acquisition for English Language Learners

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Need / Data

Objectives for Today



- **Content Objectives:** Teachers will:
 - achieve a better understanding of:
 - How assessment data can inform content instruction
 - The characteristics of academic language and why it is necessary to acquire academic vocabulary and discourse for content learning
 - How to teach academic language through content instruction
 - Learn how to do the following:
 - Select academic vocabulary to teach
 - Apply effective strategies to teach vocabulary during content-focused lessons
 - Integrate speaking and writing activities that enhance the quality of content instruction
 - Help students learn and use academic English in their speaking and writing about lesson content
- **Language Objective** – Teachers will participate in this session through:
 - Discussions about key elements of the session in small and whole groups
 - Reflection and writing about current practice, new knowledge and strategies that can be implemented within the scope of their teaching assignment



Topics for Discussion

- Introduction to Academic English Instruction
- Selection and Teaching Academic Vocabulary
- Structured Academic Discussion
- Structured Academic Writing



Part 1: Introduction to Academic English Instruction

- Content Objectives:
 - Define academic language
 - Distinguish between academic and social language
 - Make connections between academic language and the standards and assessments for ELLs in content areas:
 - ELPS
 - TELPAS
- Language Objectives:
 - Listen for ways to use TELPAS data to inform instruction
 - Describe how you can use TELPAS data in your classes



Academic Language

Includes vocabulary and discourse

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP):

“Those aspects of language proficiency which are closely related to the development of literacy.” (Cummins, 1980, p. 177)

- Specialized language of every subject area
- Includes texts, discussions, and formal writing
- Used to communicate ideas about content

(Coleman & Goldenberg, 2009; Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Nagy & Townsend, 2012)



Social vs. Academic Language

| Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) | Academic Language |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language used in social interactions• Built on oral language skills learned in native language• Takes less time for ELLs to acquire | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Used for learning in school• Both oral and written |

(Bailey, 2007; Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Zweirs, 2008)



Academic Language

- All students can learn academic English at the same time as content
- All students can practice academic English while they practice applying content knowledge
- Using academic English to accomplish content tasks deepens learning of both language and content

(Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Gibbons, 2003)



Academic English Assessment and Standards

English Language Proficiency Standards

19 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 74, Subchapter A, §74.4

Section C

Cross-curricular second language acquisition skills

Standards for academic English skills that need to be developed in content areas

- Part of Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
- K–12
- All subject areas

Section D

Proficiency-level descriptors

Describe what an ELL can do in academic English

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| In each domain: | At each level: |
| • Listening | • Beginning |
| • Speaking | • Intermediate |
| • Reading | • Advanced |
| • Writing | • Advanced High |

Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System

Student scores tell the level at which an ELL can use academic English in each domain:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing



Using TELPAS Data

- Organize data for easy reference:
 - Group by class period
 - Identify levels of each individual ELL in each domain
 - Levels: Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Advanced High
 - Domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing
- Use data to inform decisions and make linguistic accommodations:
 - Grouping
 - Additional Supports



Process

- How do you obtain TELPAS data for the ELLs in your classes?
- When and how often do you use the data?
- How do you use this information in your lesson planning?



Part 2: Selecting and Teaching Academic Vocabulary

- Content Objectives:
 - Select academic vocabulary to teach in content classrooms
 - Learn three ways to teach academic vocabulary:
 - Content activities
 - Direct experience with academic words
 - Direct instruction of words with contextualized support
- Language objectives:
 - Categorize words into tiers
 - Analyze academic vocabulary for instruction



Which Vocabulary Should be Taught?

“As a way to begin thinking about which words to teach, consider that words have different **levels of utility**.”

(Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002)



Three Tiers of Vocabulary

(Beck et al., 2002)

| TIER I Basic Words | TIER II Academic Words | TIER III Content-Specific Words |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily conversation• Nonacademic• High frequency• May need to be taught to ELLs• Often easy to illustrate | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High function• High utility• Found across disciplines• Language of mature speakers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High specialization• Specific discipline• Low frequency• Targeted for activities• Often have irregular forms (Greek or Latin origin) |



Three Tiers of Vocabulary

(August, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005; Beck et al., 2002)

| TIER I Basic Words | TIER II Academic Words | TIER III Content-Specific Words |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| separates go in and out but only | | |
| The nucleus protects the cell's DNA. It stores the cell's DNA blueprint and it separates the cell's DNA from the activity of the cytoplasm. It allows molecules to go in and out—but only selectively. | | |



Three Tiers of Vocabulary

(August, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005; Beck et al., 2002)

| TIER I Basic Words | TIER II Academic Words | TIER III Content-Specific Words |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| separates go in and out but only | | nucleus cell DNA DNA blueprint molecules cytoplasm |

The **nucleus** protects the **cell's** **DNA**. It stores the cell's **DNA blueprint** and it separates the cell's DNA from the activity of the **cytoplasm**. It allows **molecules** to go in and out—but only selectively.



Three Tiers of Vocabulary

(August, Carlo, Dressler & Snow, 2005; Beck et al., 2002)

| TIER I Basic Words | TIER II Academic Words | TIER III Content-Specific Words |
|--|---|---|
| separates go in and out but only | protects stores allows selectively | nucleus cell DNA DNA blueprint molecules cytoplasm |

The nucleus **protects** the cell's DNA. It **stores** the cell's DNA blueprint and it separates the cell's DNA from the activity of the cytoplasm. It **allows** molecules to go in and out—but only **selectively**.



Three Tiers of Vocabulary

(August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005; Beck et al., 2002)

TIER II Academic Words

protects
stores
allows
selectively

Features of Tier II Words

- Important across disciplines
- Not highly specialized; many ways to approach
- Good for making connections to other words and concepts
- Express concepts that can often be explained by using Tier I words
- Meanings can change across contexts

GET INFORMATION



Selecting the Words to Teach

- Which words will students learn along with the content of the lesson activities?
 - Words that materials introduce and explain
 - Many Tier III words
- There is no need to preteach these words



Vocabulary for Beginners

- Check individual students' understanding of key Tier I words
- Clarify word meanings as needed
- Provide bilingual glossary or dictionary
- Use visuals or objects to show meaning



Teaching Academic Vocabulary

- Introduction and labeling of concepts in content text and activities
- Two ways to preteach selected words:
 - Providing experience through actions, visuals, or demonstrations
 - Providing direct instruction of words with contextualized support



Vocabulary Through Experience

- How does Ms. Clark make the vocabulary accessible to ELLs?
 - Models
 - Act out
 - Cards to connect written word with action
- How do the vocabulary activities help prepare her students to meet the content objective?
 - Words come from descriptions in student materials
 - “Anchoring activity” as a reference

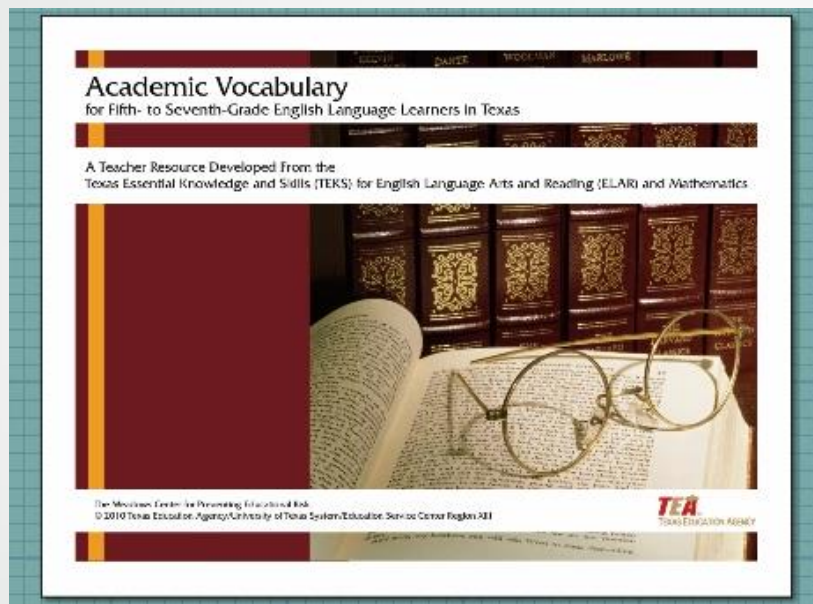


Vocabulary Through Direct Instruction

- How does Ms. Clark make the vocabulary accessible to ELLs?
 - Translation
 - Images for content and student connections
 - Small group discussion
- How do the vocabulary activities help prepare her students to meet the content objective?
 - Focuses on high-utility word
 - Shows how vocabulary will be used



Vocabulary Resource



<http://www.meadowscenter.org/files/resources/AcademicVocabulary.pdf>

Academic Vocabulary for Fifth- to Seventh-Grade English Language Learners in Texas – A teacher resource developed from the TEKS for ELAR and Math

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk
TEA/University of Texas System/Education Service Center Region XIII



Part 3: Academic Discourse

- Content Objectives:
 - Structure speaking activities in content lessons
 - Help students construct oral responses
- Language objectives:
 - Analyze the language needed to respond to an academic discussion task
 - Create sentence frames and response banks



Teaching and Practicing Academic Discourse

Explicitly teaching academic language and giving students many opportunities to exercise their speaking and writing skills can do the following:

- Scaffold learning
- Allow students to activate and extend their thinking
- Enhance content understanding

(Fisher, Frey & Rothenberg, 2008; Freeman & Freeman, 2009; Lee & Buxton, 2010)



Academic Language in TEKS Student Expectations

- **Describe** the stages of the cell cycle
- **Explain** how the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups shape American culture
- **Predict** the effects of changing slope and y-intercept in applied situations

(TEA, 2006, 2010, 2011)



Academic Language in TEKS Student Expectations

- **Describe** the stages of the cell cycle (Biology 5A)
- **Explain** how the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups shape American culture (U.S. History 26C)
- **Predict** the effects of changing slope and y-intercept in applied situations (Algebra I 6F)

EXPRESSIVE VERBS

(TEA, 2006, 2010, 2011)



Most Common Expressive Verbs in the TEKS

| | | |
|------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Analyze | Evaluate | Pose/answer (questions) |
| Communicate | Explain | Predict |
| Compare/Contrast | Formulate (situations/questions/hypotheses) | Relate |
| Describe | Make (decisions/predictions/ critical judgments) | Summarize |
| Differentiate | | |

- How do these verbs call for communication through language?
- Might that language be oral, written, or both?



Activity Example

4

TOTAL

4

TO GO

§111.32. Algebra I

(1) Foundations for functions. The student understands that a function represents a dependence of one quantity on another and can be described in a variety of ways. The student is expected to:

- (A) **describe** independent and dependent quantities in functional relationships;
- (B) gather and record data and use data sets to determine functional relationships between quantities;
- (C) **describe** functional relationships for given problem situations and write equations or inequalities to answer questions arising from the situations;
- (D) **represent** relationships among quantities using concrete models, tables, graphs, diagrams, verbal descriptions, equations, and inequalities; and
- (E) interpret and make decisions, predictions, and critical judgments from functional relationships.

(6) Linear functions. The student understands the meaning of the slope and intercepts of the graphs of linear functions and zeros of linear functions and



Comparing Student Language

| Ms. Davis' Class | Ms. Clark's Class |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "It has the green things...yeah, for food."• "And they both have this big round thing in the middle."• "Those are to do the power, right?" | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Its function is to convert sunlight into sugar."• "An organelle that both plant and animal cells have is the nucleus."• "The mitochondria generate energy for the cell." |



Guide Question 2

What would a correct student response sound or look like?

- Write it out yourself
- Use complete sentences
- “Sound like a scientist



Guide Question 3

What language support do students need to produce the response?

- Analyze the vocabulary
- Analyze the grammar and sentence structure
- Create sentence frames



Response Banks

- Especially helpful to beginners and intermediate students
- Tier II or III words and phrases
- Teacher models how to use response bank
- Not an assessment
- Provide access to academic language while learning and practicing



Guide Questions for Planning Academic Discourse Activities

- What do I want students to be able to say about this concept?
- What would a correct student response sound or look like?
- What language support do students need to produce the response?



Name That Organelle

- Can be adapted to any subject area and topic
- Small-group review activity
- Highlights academic vocabulary



Prompts for the Responder

Would it be likely to find this organelle in a plant cell?

- Yes, it would be likely to find this organelle in a plant cell.
- No, it would not be likely to find this organelle in a plant cell.

Would it be likely to find this organelle in an animal cell?

Does this organelle generate energy for the cell?

Is this organelle a vacuole?



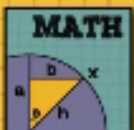



Structured Academic Writing

- Content Objectives:
 - Structure writing activities in content lessons
 - Help students construct written responses
 - Analyze the language needed to respond to an academic writing task
- Language objectives:
 - Create sentence frames and response banks



Academic Writing in the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Scientific Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide narrative descriptions of equipment, patterns, procedures, and phenomena• Write for scientific communication |
|  | English/Language Arts Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use prewriting strategies• Develop a thesis statement• Revise• Edit |
|  | Mathematics Communication and Representation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarize and communicate mathematical information• Explain mathematical ideas |
|  | Social Studies Research and Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze, compare, evaluate, and explain relationships between ideas and events• Develop a thesis and an outline• Write a research paper |



Academic Writing

- Brief academic writing
- Extensive academic writing



Brief Academic Writing Tasks

- Articulate key content concepts
- Written in one or two complete sentences
- Useful at any point during a lesson



Planning Guide Questions

- What do I want students to be able to say about this concept?
- What would a correct student response sound or look like?
- What language support do students need to produce the response?



Observations on Modeling Sentence Frames

- Presented the sentence frame as a response to the writing task
- Read the sentence frame aloud several times
- Rewrote the completed frame to look like a real sentence
- Pointed out possible variations
- Emphasized elements that would assist ELLs with standard grammar and usage in English ELPS 5D, 5F



Other Brief Writing Ideas

- Write on graphic organizers, notebooks, sticky notes, or index cards
- Use as informal assessments
- Use as basis for shared activities



Extensive Writing Tasks

- Require one or more paragraphs
- May use materials and resources
- May build on speaking activity



Analyzing Student Language Use

- Assess for content knowledge and understanding
- Analyze language use to determine the following:
 - Ways to instruct students in academic language
 - Whether language was a barrier to expressing content



Ms. Clark's Practices

- Provided clear expectations
- Modeled how to create synthesized sentences from the chart, using the sentence frames
- Built upon earlier oral and written tasks



Preparing an Extensive Writing Task

- **Guide Question 1:** What do I want students to be able to say about this concept?

How do plant and animal cells differ? How are they alike? Why? Write your response in paragraph form



Preparing an Extensive Writing Task

- **Guide Question 2:** What would a correct student response look like?

Plant and animal cells have many similarities because they are the building blocks of organisms. They have many of the same organelles to carry out similar functions in the cell. For example, both plant and animal cells have a nucleus that stores the genetic information of the cell. Both types of cells contain mitochondria to produce energy. These organelles are located in the cytoplasm, which is contained by a cell membrane. The cell membrane allows molecules to pass in and out of plant and animal cells.



Preparing an Extensive Writing Task

- **Guide Question 3:** What language support do students need to produce the response?
 - Analyze the vocabulary
 - Analyze the grammar and sentence structure
 - Create sentence frames and response banks



Creating Sentence Frames

- Using a pertinent sentence from the sample paragraph, underline the content that will vary

Both plant and animal cells have a nucleus that stores the genetic information of the cell.

- Label the blanks with clues or guide words

Both plant and animal cells have _____ that _____.

organelle

Function of the organelle



Practice

Plant cells have chloroplasts to convert carbon dioxide and water into sugar, but animal cells do not have these organelles.



Practices to Support Beginners

- Clarify important Tier I words
- Check in frequently for content comprehension
- Use native language support
- Reduce amount of writing required
- Provide more structured support and guidance

How does this fit with Sheltered Instruction?



Sheltered Instruction Components

Lesson Preparation

Building Background

Comprehensible Input

Strategies

Interaction

Practice & Application

Lesson Delivery

Review and Assessment



How does this fit with Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)?

CSR Components

Preview

Read; Brainstorm;
Predict

Click & Clunk

Clunks & Fix-Up
Strategies

Get the Gist

Main Idea

Wrap Up

Question & Review



How does this fit with Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)?

WAC Components

Read

Think

Write



Curriculum Implications



Instruction

- Strategy
- Activity
- Potential Pitfalls



Assessment

- In class
- District
- State



Comments / Questions



References

- English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) – Chapter 74.4
- ELPS Resource Supplement
- Proficiency-Level Descriptors (PLD) – in TELPAS
- Sample ELPS Lesson
- TELPAS Educator Guide
- ELL Web Portal (website)



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