Understanding Academic Language

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.

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 and use academic language.

(See Resources section for more information)

Supporting 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://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1086296090334

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

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://ell.stanford.edu/content/principles-ell-instruction-january-2013

Resources

Vocabulary-building strategies to use when working with ELL student
https://theteachablemoments.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/siop-vocabulary-strategies-to-use-when-working-with-ell-students.pdf

Top 5 vocabulary strategies for English Language Learners
https://www.teachingchannel.com/blog/top-five-vocabulary-strategies-for-english-language-learners

Teaching vocabulary in grades 4-12
http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/tips-educators-ells-teaching-vocabulary-grades-4-12

Sample strategy rubric (SIOP)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iCr4i5XWoUscfQeefks6KdDBU0-9ypDI/view?usp=sharing

Vocabulary games
http://www.fluentu.com/blog/educator-english/esl-tefl-ell-vocabulary-games/

Content vocabulary:
Different methods for teaching vocabulary: semantic mapping, Frayer Model, examples/non-examples, vocabulary games, word webs
http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/data/ck/sites/1943/files/Frayer%20Model%20JB.pdf

Eight strategies for teaching academic language
https://www.edutopia.org/blog/8-strategies-teaching-academic-language-todd-finley

Building ELLs' academic language
https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ951842.pdf

Writing-language objectives
http://blog.ellevationeducation.com/crafting-language-objectives-to-support-english-language-learners-ells

Academic Language Functions
https://www.colorincolorado.org/sites/default/files/Academic-Language-Function.pdf

What are language objectives?
http://eldstrategies.com/languageobjectives.html

Key language functions
https://www.thelanguageeducator.org/actfl/keys_planning/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1571652#articleId1571652

Language functions:
(WIDA Model Performance Indicators can be used as a model for language objectives)
https://wida.wisc.edu/search?query=model+performance+indicators

Language objectives
http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/language-objectives-key-effective-content-area-instruction-english-learners

Linguistic scaffolds for writing-language objective
https://www.scoe.org/files/kinsella-handouts.pdf

 Academic language information
http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/academic-language-and-ells-what-teachers-need-know

Transition/signal words and phrases:
List of transition-situation words and phrases
http://www.smart-words.org/linking-words/transition-words.html

Use of transition and situation words and phrases
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/02/

Submission Guidelines & 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

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

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. You may want to relate this to a unit of study that you will be or currently are teaching.

Must include the following three areas of academic language:

- Vocabulary
- Language functions
- Transition/signal words and phrases

Artifact 2: 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

	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.	Direct instruction is only provided for two of the components. A limited number of random strategies were used by the educator	Direct instruction for the three components are not provided. It is unclear which strategies were used by the educator.
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 incomplete 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 strategy was used in the	Only explains one or two of the three components. Provides little explanation of how each component strategy was used in the lesson.

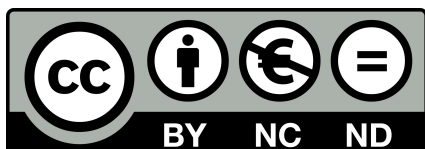|		
Includes clear roles of the educator and students during the implementation steps. Provides all artifacts used for each strategy done in the classroom, including handouts, writing on chart paper, whiteboard, etc. These can be attached as documents, photos, etc. Provides a list of academic language 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.	classroom but not one for each strategy. 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.	Provides vague or does not provide explanation of steps of implementation. Provides few or no classroom artifacts. Provides a list of academic language strategies for one or two of the components. No feedback form provided.

Part 3. Reflection

400 - 500 words

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.